THE

ARIANS

OF THE

FOURTH CENTURY,

THEIR

DOCTRINE, TEMPER, AND CONDUCT,

CHIEFLY

AS EXHIBITED IN THE COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

BETWEEN A.D. 325 & A.D. 381.

BY

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, M.A.

FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE.

Fret not thyself because of the ungodly, neither be thou envious against the evil doers. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and be withered even as the green herb. Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good; dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Psalm xxxvii. 1—3.

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TO THE

REV. JOHN KEBLE,

FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE,

PROFESSOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

FROM

HIS AFFECTIONATE FRIEND AND SERVANT;

J. H. N.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following work was written in the early part of last year, for Messrs. Rivington's "Theological Library;" but as it seemed, on its completion, little fitted for the objects with which that publication has been undertaken, it makes its appearance in an independent form. Some apology is due to the reader for the length of the introductory chapter, but it was intended as the opening of a more extensive undertaking. It may be added, to prevent mistake, that the theological works cited at the foot of the page, are referred to for the facts, rather than the opinions they contain; though some of them, as the "Defensio Fidei Nicenæ," evince gifts, moral and intellectual, of so high a cast, as to render it a privilege to be allowed to sit at the feet of their authors, and to receive the words, which they have been, as it were, commissioned to deliver.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

WHEN in the autumn of 1852 I established a press in connection with my mission here, the difficulty which met me at the outset was to find employment for it. Being anxious to make it serviceable to the cause of the Church, I wished it to be the means of bringing forward a few Theological works which were difficult to be procured. One of the first that occurred to me was the present treatise, which I had read several years before, with the deepest interest, but which had become so rare that for a considerable time I had endeavoured in vain to procure a copy. A series of communications (with the details of which it is unnecessary to trouble the reader) took place with the Author and one of his friends, to whom he had conveyed the copy-right. It was at one time proposed that the Author should correct the sheets and make alterations in the style &c.; but it was afterwards felt that it would be preferable to have an *exact reprint* of the former edition, which accordingly is now presented to the reader.

Soon after the printing began, it was taken up by the publisher whose name is on the title-page, under whose auspices it now appears; and it is hoped that the graphic delineations of character, the luminous investigation of the real springs of the events in the third and fourth centuries, and, above all, the masterly vindication of the orthodoxy of the great Alexandrian school of divines, may prove an antidote to many of the things now written in disparagement of the early ages of the Church.

G. H. FORBES.

PARSONAGE,
BURNTISLAND.

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THE

ARIANS

OF

THE FOURTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

SCHOOLS AND PARTIES IN AND ABOUT THE ANTE-NICENE CHURCH, CONSIDERED IN THEIR RELATION TO THE ARIAN HERESY.

SECTION I.

THE CHURCH OF ANTIOCH.

It is proposed in the following pages, to trace the outlines of the history of Arianism, between the first and the second General Councils. These are its natural chronological limits, whether by Arianism we mean a heresy or a party in the Church. In the Councils held at Nicæa, in Bithynia, A. D. 325. it was formally detected and condemned. In the subsequent years it ran its course, through various modifications of opinion, and with various success, till the date of the second General Council, held, A. D. 381, at Constantinople, when the resources of heretical subtilty being at length exhausted, the Arian party was ejected from the Catholic body, and formed into a distinct sect, exterior to it. It is during this period, while it still maintained its hold upon the creeds and the government of the Church that it especially invites the attention of the student in ecclesiastical history. Afterwards, it presents nothing new in its doctrine, and is only remarkable as becoming the animating principle of a second series of persecutions, when the barbarians of the North, who were infected with the heresy, possessed themselves of the provinces of the Roman Empire.

The line of history which is thus limited by the two first Ecumenical Councils, will be found to pass through a variety

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of others, provincial and patriarchal, which form easy and intelligible divisions of it, and present the heretical doctrine in the various stages of its impiety. Accordingly, these shall be taken as cardinal points for our narrative to rest upon;—and it will matter little in effect, whether it be called a history of the Councils, or of Arianism, between the eras already marked out.

However, it is necessary to direct the reader's attention in the first place, to the state of parties and schools, in and about the Church, at the time of its rise, and to the sacred doctrine which it assailed, in order to obtain a due insight into the history of the controversy; and the discussions which these subjects involve, will occupy a considerable portion of the volume. I shall address myself without delay to this work; and, in this section propose to show that Arianism originated in the Church of Antioch, and to observe upon the state and genius of that Church in primitive times. In the sections which follow, I shall consider its relation towards the heathen philosophies, and heresies then prevalent; and towards the Church of Alexandria, to which it is often referred, though with very little pretence of reasoning.* The consideration of the doctrine of the Trinity, shall form a separate chapter.

Paulus of Samosata.

During the third century, the Church of Antioch was more or less acknowledged as the metropolis of Syria, Cilicia, Phœnicia, Comagene, Osrhoene, and Mesopotamia, in which provinces it afterwards held patriarchal sway.[a] It had been the original centre of Apostolical missions among the heathen;[b] and claimed St. Peter himself for its first bishop, who had been succeeded by Ignatius, Theophilus, Babylas, and others of sacred memory in the universal Church, as champions and martyrs of the faith.[c] The secular importance of the city, added to the influence which accrued to it from the religious associations thus connected with its name, especially when the emperors made Syria the seat of their government. This ancient and celebrated Church, however, is painfully conspicuous in the middle of the century, as affording so open a manifestation of the spirit of Antichrist, as to fulfil almost literally the prophecy of the Apostle in 2 Thess. ii.[d] Paulus, of Samosata, who was raised to the see of Antioch not many years after the martyrdom of Babylas, after holding the episcopate for ten years, was deposed by a Council of eastern bishops, held in that city A. D. 272. on the ground of his heretical notions concerning the nature of Christ. His original calling seems to have been that of a sophist;[e] how he

[a] Bingham, Antiq. ix. 1. [b] Acts xi. xiii. xiv.
[c] Vide Tillemont. Mem. vol. i. &c. [d] Vide Euseb. vii. 30.
[e] Mosheim, de Reb. ante Constant. sæc. iii. § 35

obtained admittance into the clerical order is unknown; his elevation, or at least, his continuance in the see, he owed to the celebrated Zenobia,[a] to whom his literary attainments, and his political talents, may be supposed to have recommended him. Whatever were the personal virtues of the Queen of the East, who is said to have been a Jewess by birth or creed, it is not surprising that she was little solicitous for the credit or influence of the Christian Church within her dominions. The character of Paulus is consigned to history in the Synodal letter of the bishops, written at the time of his condemnation;[b] which, being circulated through the Church, might fairly be trusted, even though the high names of Gregory of Neocæsarea and Firmilian were not found in the number of his judges. It is there marked with a rapacity, an arrogance, a vulgar ostentation and desire of popularity, an extraordinary profaneness, and a profligacy, which cannot but reflect seriously upon the Church and clergy which elected, and so long endured him. As to his heresy, it is difficult to determine what were his precise sentiments concerning the Person of Christ, though they were certainly derogatory of the doctrine of His absolute divinity and eternal existence. Indeed, it is probable that he had not any clear view on the solemn subject on which he allowed himself to speculate; nor was anxious to make proselytes and form a party in the Church.[c] Ancient writers inform us that his heresy was a kind of Judaism in doctrine, adopted to please his Jewish patroness;[d] from the very object which he set before him, it was not likely to be very systematic or profound. His habits, too, as a sophist, would dispose him to employ himself in attacks upon the Catholic doctrine, and in irregular discussion, rather than in the sincere effort to obtain some definite conclusions, to satisfy his own mind or convince others. And the supercilious spirit, which the Synodal letter describes as leading him to express contempt for the divines who preceded him at Antioch, would naturally occasion incaution in his theories, and a carelessness about guarding them from inconsistencies, even where he perceived them. Indeed, the Primate of Syria had already obtained the highest post to which ambition could aspire, and had nothing to labour for; and having, as we find, additional engagements as a civil

[a] He was raised to the episcopate at the commencement of Odenatus's successes against Sapor, (Tillemont Mem. vol. iv Chronol) In the years which followed, he held a *civil* magistracy with his ecclesiastical dignity; in the temporalities of which, moreover, he was upheld by Zenobia, some years after his formal deposition by the neighbouring bishops. (Basnag Annal A. D. 269, §. 6.)

[b] Euseb. Hist. vii. 30.

[c] Mosheim, de Reb. ante Cost § 35, n 1.

[d] Athan. Epist. ad Monachos, §. 71. Theod, Hær. ii. 8. Chrysost. in Joann. Hom. 7. but Philastr. Hær. § 64 says that Paulus docuit Zenobiam judaizare.

magistrate, he would still less be likely to covet the barren honours of an heresiarch. A sect, it is true, was formed upon his tenets, and called after his name, and has a place in ecclesiastical history till the middle of the 5th century; but it never was a considerable body, and even as early as the date of the Nicene Council, had split into parties, differing by various shades of heresy from the orthodox faith.[a] We shall have a more correct notion, then, of the heresy of Paulus, if we consider him as the founder of a school rather than of a sect, as encouraging in the Church the use of those disputations, and sceptical inquiries, which belonged to the heathen academies, and scattering up and down the seeds of errors, which sprang up and bore fruit in the generation after him. A confirmation of this view, which is suggested by the original vocation of Paulus, the temporal motives which are said to have influenced him, and by his inconsistencies, is derived from the circumstance, that his intimate friend and fellow-countryman, Lucian, who schismatized or was excommunicated on his deposition, held heretical tenets of a diametrically opposite nature, i. e. what were afterwards called Arian, Paulus himself advocating a doctrine which nearly resembled what is commonly called the Sabellian.

Lucian, presbyter of Antioch.

More shall be said concerning Paulus of Samosata presently; but now let us advance to the history of this Lucian, a man of learning,[b] and at length a martyr, but who may almost be considered the author of Arianism. It is very common, though evidently illogical, to infer the actual rise of one school of opinions from another, from some real or supposed similarity in their respective tenets. It is thus, e. g. Platonism, or again, Originism, has been assigned as the actual source from which Arianism was derived. Now, Lucian's doctrine is known to have been precisely the same as that species of Arianism afterwards called Semi-arianism;[c] but it is not on that account that the rise of Arianism is here attributed to him. There is an historical, and not merely a doctrinal connexion between him and the Arian party. In his school are found, in matter of fact, the names of most of the original advocates of Arianism, and all those who were the most influential in their

[a] Tillemont. Mem. vol. iv. p. 126. Athan. in Arianos, iv. 30.

[b] He was distinguished in biblical literature, being the author of a third edition of the Septuagint. Vid. Tillemont. Mem. vol. v. p. 202, 203. Du Pin, cent. iii.

[c] Bull, Baronius, and others, maintain his orthodoxy. The Semi-arians adopted his creed, which is extant. Though a friend, as it appears, of Paulus, he opposed the Sabellians, (by one of whom he was at length betrayed to the heathen persecutors of the Church,) and this opposition would lead him to incautious statements of an Arian tendency. Vid. below, Section v. Ep[illegible]nius (Ancor. 33.) tells us, that he considered the Word in the Person of [illegible] as the substitute for a human soul.

respective Churches throughout the East:—Arius himself, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Leontius, Eudoxius, Asterius, and others, who will be familiar to us in the sequel; and these actually appealed to him as their authority, and adopted from him the party designation of Collucianists.[a] In spite of this undoubted connexion between Lucian and the Arians, we might be tempted to believe, that the assertions of the latter concerning his heterodoxy, originated in their wish to implicate a man of high character in the censures which the Church directed against themselves, were it not undeniable, that during the patriarchates of the three prelates who successively followed Paulus, Lucian was under excommunication. The Catholics too, are silent in his vindication, and some of them actually admit his unsoundness.[b] However, ten or fifteen years before his martyrdom, he was reconciled to the Church; and we may suppose that he then recanted whatever was heretical in his creed: and his glorious end was allowed to wipe out from the recollection of Catholics of succeeding times those passages of his history, which nevertheless were so miserable in their results in the age succeeding his own. Chrysostom's panegyric on the festival of his martyrdom is still extant, Ruffinus mentions him in honourable terms, and Jerome praises his industry, erudition, and eloquence in writing.[c]

Arianism of Antioch

Such is the historical connexion at the very first sight between the Arian party and the school of Antioch: corroborative evidence will hereafter appear, in the similarity of character which exists between the two bodies. At present, let it be taken as a confirmation of a fact, which Lucian's history directly proves, that Eusebius the historian, who is suspected of Arianism, and his friend Paulinus of Tyre, one of its first and principal supporters, though not pupils of Lucian, were more or less educated, and the latter ordained at Antioch;[d] while in addition to the Arian prelates at Nicæa already mentioned, Theodotus of Laodicea, Gregory of Berytus, Narcissus of Neronias, and two others, who were all supporters of Arianism at the Council, were all situated within the ecclesiastical influence, and some of them in the vicinity of Antioch;[e] so that, (besides Arius himself,) of thirteen prelates, who according to Theodoret, arianized at the Council, nine are referrable to the Syrian patriarchate. If we continue the history of the controversy, we have fresh evidence of the connexion between Antioch and Arianism. During the interval between the Nicene Council and the death of Constantius, (A. D. 325—361.), Antioch is the metropolis of the heretical, as Alexandria

[a] Theod. Hist. i. 5. Epiph Hær lxix 6 Cave Hist. Literar vol i p 201
[b] Theod. Hist. i. 4. [c] Vid Tillemont Mem vol v ibid
[d] Vales. de vit Euseb. et ad Hist. x i
[e] Tillemont Mem. vol vi p 276

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of the orthodox party. At Antioch, the heresy recommenced its attack upon the Church after the decision at Nicæa. In a Council held at Antioch, it first showed itself in the shape of Semi-arianism, when Lucian's creed was produced. There, too, in this and subsequent councils, negociations on the doctrine in dispute were conducted with the Western Church. At Antioch, lastly, and at Tyre, a suffragan see, the sentence of condemnation was pronounced upon Athanasius.

Its Judaism.

Hitherto I have spoken of individuals as the authors of the apostacy which is to engage our attention in the following chapters · but there is reason to fear that men like Paulus, were but symptoms of a corrupted state of the Church. The history of the times gives us sufficient evidence of the luxuriousness of Antioch ; and it need scarcely be said, that coldness in faith is the sure consequence of relaxation of morals. Here, however, passing by this general subject, which is too obvious to require dwelling upon, I would rather direct the reader's attention to the particular form which the Antiochene corruptions seem to have assumed, viz , that of Judaism ; which at that time, it must be recollected, was the creed of an existing nation, acting upon the Church, and not merely, as at this day, a system of opinions more or less discoverable among professing Christians.

The Jews.

The fortunes of the Jewish people had experienced a favourable change since the reign of Hadrian. The violence of Roman persecution had been transferred to the Christian Church; while the Jews, gradually recovering their strength, and obtaining permission to settle and make proselytes to their creed, at length became an influential political body in the neighbourhood of their ancient home, especially in the Syrian provinces which were at that time the chief residence of the court. Severus (A. D. 194.) is said to have been the first to extend to them the imperial favour, though he afterwards withdrew it. Heliogabalus, and Alexander, natives of Syria, gave them new privileges; and the latter went so far as to place the image of Abraham in his private chapel, among the objects of his ordinary worship. Philip the Arabian continued towards them a countenance, which was converted into an open patronage in the reign of Zenobia. During the Decian persecution, they had been sufficiently secure at Carthage, to venture to take part in the popular ridicule directed against the Christians; and they are even said to have incited Valerian to his cruelties against the Church.[a]

Their carnal system as influencing Christians.

But this direct hostility was not the only, nor the most formidable means of harassing their religious enemies, which their improving fortunes opened upon them. With their ad-

[a] Basnage Hist des Juifs vi 12 Tillemont Hist des Emper. iii. iv.

vancement in wealth and importance, their national character displayed itself under a new exterior. The moroseness for which they were previously notorious, in great measure disappears with their dislodgment from the soil of their ancestors; and on their re-appearance as settlers in a strange land, those festive, self-indulgent habits, which, in earlier times, had but drawn on them the animadversion of their Prophets, became their distinguishing mark in the eyes of external observers.[a] Presenting then the characters of a religion, sufficiently correct in the main articles of faith to satisfy the reason, and yet indulgent to the carnal nature of man, Judaism occupied that place in the Christian world, which has since been filled by a corruption of Christianity itself. While its adherents manifested a rancorous malevolence towards the zealous champions of the Church, they courted the Christian populace by arts adapted to captivate and corrupt the unstable and worldly-minded. Their pretensions to magical power gained them credit with the superstitious, to whom they sold amulets for the cure of diseases; their noisy spectacles attracted the curiosity of the idle, who weakened their faith, while they disgraced their profession, by attending the worship of the Synagogue. Accordingly there was formed around the Church a mixed multitude, who, without relinquishing their dependence on Christianity for the next world, sought in Judaism the promise of temporal blessings, and a more accommodating rule of life than the gospel revealed. Chrysostom found this evil so urgent at Antioch in his day, as to interrupt his course of homilies on the heresy of the Anomœans, in order to direct his preaching against the seductions to which his hearers were then exposed, by the return of the Jewish festivals.[b] In another part of the empire, the Council of Illiberis found it necessary to forbid a superstitious custom, which had been introduced among the country people, of having recourse to the Jews for a blessing on their fields. Afterwards, Constantine made a law against the inter-marriage of Jews and Christians; and Constantius confiscated the goods of Christians who lapsed to Judaism.[c] These successive enactments may be taken as evidence of the view entertained by the Church of her own danger, from the artifices of the Jews. Lastly, the attempt to rebuild the temple in Julian's reign, was but the renewal of a project on their part, which Constantine had already frustrated, for reinstating their religion in its ancient ritual and country.[d]—Such was the position of the Jews towards the primitive Church;

[a] Vid. Gibbon, Hist. ch. xvi. note 6. Chrysost. in Judæos i. p. 386—388, &c.
[b] Chrysost. in Judæos. i. ibid. p. 389, &c.
[c] Bingham, Antiq. xvi. 6. Basnage, Hist. des Juifs vi. 14.
[d] Chrysost. in Judæos iii. p. 435

especially in the patriarchate of Antioch; which, I have said, was their principal place of settlement, and at one time was under the civil government of a Judaizing princess, the most illustrious personage of her times, who possessed influence enough among the Christians to seduce the Metropolitan himself from the orthodox faith. But the evidence of the existence of Judaism, *as a system*, in the portion of Christendom in question, is contained in a circumstance which deserves our particular attention; the adoption, in those parts, of the quarto-deciman rule of observing Easter, when it was on the point of being discontinued in the Churches of proconsular Asia, where it had first prevailed.

The Quarto-decimans of Asia

It is well known that at the close of the 2d century, a controversy arose between Victor, Bishop of Rome, and Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, concerning the proper time for celebrating the Easter feast, or rather for terminating the ante-paschal fast. At that time, the whole of Christendom, with the exception of proconsular Asia, (a district of about 200 miles by 50) and its immediate neighbourhood,[a] continued the fast on to the Sunday after the Jewish Passover, which they kept as the festival as we do now, in order that the weekly and yearly commemorations of the Resurrection might coincide. But the Christians of the proconsulate, guided by Jewish custom, ended the fast on the very day of the paschal sacrifice, without regarding the actual place held in the week by the feast, which immediately followed; and were accordingly called Quarto-decimans.[b] Victor felt the inconvenience of this want of uniformity in the celebration of the chief Christian festival; and was urgent, even far beyond the bounds of charity, and the rights of his see, in his endeavour to obtain the compliance of the Asiatics. Polycrates, who was primate of the Quarto-deciman Churches, defended their peculiar custom by a statement which is plain and unexceptionable. They had received their rule, he said, from St. John and St. Philip the Apostles, Polycarp of Smyrna, Melito of Sardis, and others; and deemed it incumbent on them to transmit as they had received. There was nothing Judaistic in this conduct; for, though the Apostles intended the Jewish discipline to cease with those converts who were born under it, yet it was by no means clear, that its calendar came under the proscription of its rites. On the other hand, it was natural that the Asian Churches should be affectionately attached to a custom which their first founders, and they inspired teachers, had sanctioned.

The Quarto-decimans of Syria

But the case was very different, when Churches, which had for centuries observed the Gentile rule, adopted a custom

[a] Euseb Hist v. 23—25 and Valer ad loc.
[b] Exod xii 6 Vid Tillemont Mem vol iii p 629, &c

which at the time had only existence among the Jews. The Quarto-decimans of the proconsulate had come to an end by A. D. 276; and, up to that date, the Antiochene provinces kept their Easter feast in conformity with the Catholic usage;[a] yet at the time of the Nicene Council, (fifty years afterwards,) we find the latter the especial and solitary champions of the opposite rule.[b] We can scarcely doubt that they adopted it in imitation of the Jews who were settled among them, who are known to have influenced them, and who about that very date, be it observed, had a patroness in Zenobia, and, what was stranger, almost a convert in the person of the Christian Primate. There is evidence, moreover, of the *growth* of the custom in the patriarchate at the end of the third century; which well agrees with the hypothesis of its being an innovation, and not founded on ancient usage. And again, (as was natural, supposing the change to begin at Antioch,) at the date of the Nicene Council, it was established only in the Syrian Churches, and was but making its way with incomplete success in the extremities of the patriarchate. In Mesopotamia, Audius began his schism with the characteristic of the quarto-deciman rule, just at the date of the Council;[c] and about the same time, Cilicia was contested between the two parties, as I gather from the conflicting statements of Constantine and Athanasius, that it did, and that it did not, conform to the Gentile custom.[d] By the same time, the controversy had reached Egypt also. Epiphanius refers to a celebrated contest, now totally unknown, between one Crescentius and Alexander, the first defender of the Catholic faith against Arianism.[e]

The Quarto-decimans of Phrygia

It is true that there was a third Quarto-deciman school, lying geographically between the proconsulate and Antioch, which at first sight might seem to have been the medium by which the Jewish custom was conveyed on from the former to the latter; but there is no evidence of its existence till the end of the fourth century. In order to complete my account of the Quarto-decimans and show more fully their relation to the Judaizers, I will here make mention of it; though, in doing so, I must somewhat digress from the main subject under consideration.

The portion of Asia Minor, lying between the proconsulate and the river Halys, may be regarded, in the Ante-Nicene

[a] Tillemont Mem vol iii p 48, who conjectures that Anatolius of Laodicea was the author of the change But changes require predisposing causes

[b] Athan. ad Afros, § 2

[c] Epiph Hær lxx § 1

[d] Athan. ad Afros supra Socr Hist i 9, where, by the bye, the proconsulate is spoken of as conforming to the general usage, so as clearly to distinguish between the two Quarto-deciman schools

[e] Epiph. Ibid §. 9

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times, as one country, comprising the provinces of Phrygia, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Paphlagonia, afterwards included within the Exarchate of Cæsarea; and was then marked by a religious character of a peculiar cast. Socrates, speaking of this district, informs us, that its inhabitants were distinguished above other nations by a strictness and seriousness of manners, having neither the ferocity of the Scythians and Thracians, nor the frivolity and sensuality of the Orientals.[a] The excellent qualities, however, implied in this description, were tarnished by the love of singularity, the spirit of insubordination and separatism, and the gloomy spiritual pride which their history evidences. St. Paul's Epistle furnishes us with the first specimen of this unchristian temper, as evinced in the conduct of the Galatians, who, dissatisfied with the exact evangelical doctrine, aspired to some higher and more availing system than the Apostle preached to them. What the Galatians were in the first century, Montanus and Novatian became in the second and third; both authors of a harsh and arrogant discipline, both natives of the country in question,[b] and both meeting with special success in that country, although the schism of the latter was organized at Rome, of which Church he was a presbyter. It, was, moreover, the peculiarity, more or less, of both Montanists and Novatians, in those parts, to differ from the general Church as to the time of observing Easter;[c] whereas, neither in Africa nor in Rome did the two sects dissent from the received rule.[d] What was the principle or origin of this irregularity, does not clearly appear; unless we may consider as characteristic, what seems to be the fact, that when their neighbours of the proconsulate were Quarto-decimans, they (in the words of Socrates) "shrank from feasting on the Jewish festival,"[e] and after the others had conformed to the Gentile rule, they, on the contrary, openly Judaized.[f] This change in their practice, which took place at the end of the fourth century, was mainly effected by a Jew, of the name of Sabbatius, who becoming a convert to Christianity, rose to the episcopate in the Novatian Church. Sozomen, in giving an account of the transaction, observes that it was a national custom with the Galatians and Phrygians to Judaize in their observance of Easter. Coupling this remark with Eusebius's mention of Churches in the neighbourhood of the proconsulate, as included among the Quarto-decimans whom Victor condemned,[g] we may suspect that the perverse spirit which St. Paul reproves in his Epistle, and which we have

[a] Socrat Hist iv 28, of Epiph. Hær xlviii. 14.
[b] Vales ad loc [c] Socrat Hist. v. 22 Sozom. Hist. vii. 18
[d] Tertull de jejun. 14. Vales ad Sozom vii. 18 Socrat. Hist v. 21.
[e] Valesius ad loc applies this differently
[f] Socrat Hist. v 21 [g] Euseb Hist ut supra

been tracing in its Montanistic and Novatian varieties, still lurked in those parts in its original Judaizing form, till after a course of years, it was accidentally brought out by circumstances upon the public scene of ecclesiastical history. If further evidence of the connexion of the Quarto-deciman usage with Judaism be required, I may refer to Constantine's Nicene Edict, which forbids it, among other reasons, on the ground of its being Jewish.[a]

Connexion of Judaism with Arianism.

To return. The evidence, which has been adduced for the existence of Judaism in the Church of Antioch, is not without its bearing upon the history of the rise of Arianism. I will not say that the Arian doctrine is the direct result of a Judaizing practice; but it deserves consideration whether a tendency to derogate from the honour due to Christ, was not created by an observance of the Jewish rites, and much more, by that carnal, self-indulgent religion, which seems at that time to have prevailed among the rejected nation. When the spirit and morals of a people are materially debased, varieties of doctrinal error spring up, as if self-sown, and are rapidly propagated. While Judaism inculcated a superstitious, or even idolatrous dependence on the mere casualties of daily life, and gave licence to the grosser tastes of human nature, it necessarily indisposed the mind for the severe and unexciting mysteries, the large indefinite promises, and the remote sanctions, of the Catholic faith; which fell as cold and offensive on the depraved imagination, as the doctrines of the Divine Unity and of implicit trust in the unseen God, on the minds of the early Israelites. Those who were not constrained by the message of mercy, had time attentively to consider the intellectual difficulties which were the medium of its communication, and heard but "a hard saying" in what was sent from heaven as "tidings of great joy." "The mind," says Hooker, "feeling present joy, is always marvellously unwilling to admit any other cogitation, and in that case, casteth off those disputes whereunto the intellectual part at other times easily draweth. .... The people that are said in the sixth of John to have gone after our Lord to Capernaum .... leaving Him on the one side of the sea of Tiberias, and finding Him again as soon as they themselves by ship were arrived on the contrary side .... as they wondered, so they asked also, 'Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?' The Disciples, when Christ appeared to them in a far more strange and miraculous manner, moved no question, but rejoiced greatly in what they saw. ... The one, because they enjoyed not, disputed; the other disputed not, because they enjoyed."[b]

The Mosaic Rites.

It is also a question, whether the mere performance of the

[a] Theod Hist i. 10

[b] Eccles Pol v 67

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rites of the Law, of which Christ came as antitype and repealer, has not a tendency to withdraw the mind from the contemplation of the more glorious and real images of the gospel; so that the Christians of Antioch would diminish their reverence towards the true Saviour of man, in proportion as they trusted to the media of worship, provided for a time by the Mosaic ritual. It is this consideration which accounts for the energy with which the great Apostle combats the adoption of the Jewish ordinances by the Christians of Galatia, and which might seem excessive, till vindicated by events subsequent to his own day. In the Epistle addressed to them, the Judaizers are described as men labouring under an irrational fascination, fallen from grace, and self-excluded from the Christian privileges;[a] when in appearance they were but using, what on the one hand might be called mere external forms, and on the other, had actually been delivered to the Jews on Divine authority. Some light is thrown upon the subject by the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which it is implied throughout, that the Jewish rites, after their Antitype was come, did but conceal from the eye of faith His divinity, sovereignty, and all-sufficiency. If we turn to the history of the Church, we seem to see the evils in actual existence, which the Apostle anticipated in prophecy: we see, i. e. that in the obsolete furniture of the Jewish ceremonial, there was in fact retained the pestilence of Jewish unbelief, tending (whether directly or not, at least eventually) to introduce fundamental error respecting the Person of Christ.

The Cerinthians and Ebionites.

Before the end of the first century, this result is disclosed in the system of the Cerinthians and the Ebionites. These sects, though more or less infected with Gnosticism, were of Jewish origin, and observed the Mosaic Law; and, whatever might be the minute peculiarities of their doctrinal views, they also agreed in entertaining Jewish rather than Gnostic conceptions of the Person of Christ.[b] Ebion, especially, is characterized by his Humanitarian creed; while, on the other hand, his Judaism was so notorious, that Tertullian does not scruple to describe him as virtually the object of the Apostle's censure in his Epistle to the Galatians.[c]

The Nazarenes.

The Nazarenes are next to be noticed;—not for the influence they exercised on the creed of the Church, but as evidencing, with the sects just mentioned, the latent connexion between a Judaizing discipline and heresy in doctrine. Who they were, and what their tenets, has been a subject of much controversy. It is sufficient for our purpose—and so far is undoubted—that they were at the same time "zealous of the Law" and unsound

[a] Socrat. Hist. v. 22. [b] Burton, Bamp. Lect. Notes 74. 82.

[c] Tertull. de Præscript. Hæret. c 33, p. 243. Why should we doubt that Ebion really existed?

in their theological system;[a] and this without being related to the Gnostic families: a circumstance which establishes them as a more cogent evidence of the real connexion of ritual with doctrinal Judaism than is furnished by the mixed theologies of Ebion and Cerinthus.[b] It is worth observing, that their declension from orthodoxy appears to have been gradual; Epiphanius is the first writer who includes them by name in the number of heretical sects.[c]

Such are the instances of the connexion between Judaism and unsoundness in creed, previously to the age of Paulus, who still more strikingly exemplifies it. First, we are in possession of his doctrinal views, which are grossly Humanitarian; next we find that, in early times, they were acknowledged to be of Jewish origin; further, that his ritual Judaism also was so notorious, that one author even affirms that he observed the rite of circumcision:[d] and lastly, just after his day we discover the rise of a Jewish usage, the Quarto-deciman, in the provinces of Christendom, immediately exposed to his influence.

Confirmatory facts.

It may be added, that this view of the bearing of Judaism upon the sceptical school afterwards called Arian, is countenanced by frequent passages in the writings of the contemporary

[a] Burton, Bamp. Lect. Note 84.

[b] For the curious in ecclesiastical antiquity, Mosheim has elicited the following account of their name and sect, (Mosheim de Reb Christ. ante Constant Saecul ii. § 38, 39.) The title of Nazarene he considers to have originally belonged to the body of Jewish converts, taken by them with a reference to Matt. ii. 23, while the Gentiles at Antioch assumed the Greek appellation of Christians. As the Mosaic ordinances gradually fell into disuse among the former, in process of time it became the peculiar designation of the Church of Jerusalem; and that Church, in turn, throwing off its Jewish exterior in the reign of Hadrian, on being unfairly subjected to the disabilities then laid upon the rebel nation, it finally settled upon the scanty remnant, who considered their ancient ceremonial to be an essential part of their present profession. These judaizers, from an over-attachment to the forms, proceeded, in course of time, to imbibe the spirit of the degenerate system; and ended in doctrinal views not far short of modern Socinianism.

[c] Burton, Bamp. Lect. note 84 Considering the Judaism of the Quartodecimans after Victor's age, is it impossible that he may have suspected that the old leaven was infecting the Churches of Asia? This will explain and partly excuse his earnestness in the controversy with them. It must be recollected that he witnessed, in his own branch of the Church, the rise of the first simply Humanitarian school which the world had seen, that of Theodotus, Artemas, &c. (Euseb. Hist. v. 28.) the latter of whom is charged by Alexander with reviving the heresy of the judaizing Ebion (Theod Hist. i. 4.) Again: Theodotus, Montanus, and Praxeas, whose respective heresies he was engaged in combating, all belonged to the neighbourhood of the proconsulate, where there seems to have been a school, from which Praxeas derived his heresy; (Theod. Hær. iii. 3.) while Montanism, as its after history shows, contained in it the seeds, both of the Quarto-deciman and Sabellian errors. (Tillemont. Mem. vol. ii. p. 199. 205. Athan. in Arian. ii. 43.) It may be added, that the younger Theodotus is suspected of Montanism (Tillemont. Mem. vol. iii. p. 277.)

[d] Philastr. Hær. § 64.

Fathers, on which no stress, perhaps, could fairly be laid, were not their meaning interpreted by the above historical facts.[a] Moreover, in the popular risings which took place in Antioch and Alexandria in favour of Arianism, the Jews sided with the heretical party;[b] evincing thereby, not indeed any definite interest in the subject of dispute, but a sort of spontaneous feeling, that the side of heresy was their natural position; and further, that its spirit, and the character which it created, were congenial to their own. Or, again, if we consider the subject from a different point of view, and omitting dates and schools, take a general survey of Christendom during the first centuries, we shall find it divided into the same two parties, both on the Arian and the Quarto-deciman questions; Rome and Alexandria with their dependencies being the champions of the Catholic tradition in either controversy, and Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor, being the strong-holds of the opposition. And these are the two questions which occasioned the deliberations of the Nicene Fathers.

However, it is of far less consequence, as it is less certain, whether Arianism be of Jewish origin, than whether it arose at Antioch: which is the point principally insisted on in the foregoing pages. For in proportion as it is traced to Antioch, so is the charge of originating it, removed from the great Alexandrian school, upon which, various enemies of our Apostolical Church, have been eager to fasten it. In corroboration of what has been said above on this subject, I here add the words of Alexander, in his letter to the Church of Constantinople, at the beginning of the controversy; which are of themselves decisive in evidence of the part which Antioch had in giving rise to the detestable blasphemy which he was combating.

"Ye are not ignorant," he writes to the Constantinopolitan Church, "concerning Arianism, that this rebellious doctrine belongs to *Ebion* and Artemas, and is in imitation of *Paulus of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch*, who was deprived by the sentence of the bishops assembled in Council from all quarters. Paulus was succeeded by *Lucian*, who remained in excommunication for many years during the time of three bishops. . . . Our present heretics have drunk up the dregs of their impiety, and are their secret offspring; Arius and Archillas, and their disorderly party, incited as they are, to greater excesses by three Syrian prelates, who happen to agree with them. . . . . Accordingly, they have been expelled from the Church, as

[a] Athan. de Decret. 2. 27. de sentent; Dionys. 3, 4. ad Episc. Æg. 13 de fug. 2. in Arian iii. 27. Chrysost. Hom. in Anomœos and in Judæos. Theod. Hist. i. 4. Epiphan. Hær. lxix. 79.

[b] *Basnage, Hist. des Juifs.* vi. 41.

enemies of the pious Catholic doctrine; according to St. Paul's sentence, 'If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than ye have received, let him be anathema.[a]'"

SECTION II.

THE SCHOOLS OF THE SOPHISTS.

As Antioch was the birth-place, so were the Schools of the Sophists the place of education of the heretical spirit which we are considering. In this section, I propose to show its disputatious character, and to refer it to these schools as the source of it.

Rapid extension of the Arian controversy.

The vigour of the first movement of the heresy, and the rapid extension of the controversy which it introduced, are some of the more remarkable circumstances connected with its history. In the course of six years, it called for the interposition of a General Council; though of 318 bishops there assembled, only 22, on the largest calculation, and, as it really appears, only 13, were after all found to be its supporters. Though thus condemned by the whole Christian world, in a few years it broke out again; secured the patronage of the imperial court, which had recently been proselyted to the Christian faith; made its way into the highest dignities of the Church; presided at her Councils, and tyranized over the majority of her members who were orthodox believers.

Wide influence of Lucian's School.

Now, doubtless, one chief cause of these successes is found in the circumstance, that Lucian's pupils were brought together from so many different places, and were promoted to posts of influence in so many parts of the Church. Thus Eusebius, Maris, and Theognis, were bishops of the principal sees of Bythynia; Menophantes was exarch of Ephesus; and Eudoxius was one of the bishops of Comagene. Other causes will hereafter appear in the secular history of the day; but here I am to speak of their talent for disputation, to which after all they were principally indebted for their success.

Disputatious character of Arianism.

It is obvious, that in every contest, the assailant, as such, has the advantage of the party assailed; and that not merely from the recommendation which novelty gives to his cause in the eyes of bystanders, but also from the greater facility in the nature of things, of finding, than of solving objections, whatever be the question in dispute. Accordingly, the skill of a

[a] Theod. Hist. i. 4.

disputant mainly consists in securing an offensive position, fastening on the weaker points of his adversary's system, and not relaxing his hold till the latter sinks under his impetuosity, without having the opportunity to display the strength of his own cause, and to bring it to bear upon his opponent; or, to make use of a familiar illustration, in causing a sudden run upon his resources, which the circumstances of time and place do not allow him to meet. This was the artifice to which Arianism owed its first successes.[a] It owed them to the circumstance of its being (in its original form) a sceptical rather than a dogmatic system; to its proposing to inquire into and reform the received creed, rather than to hazard one of its own. The heresies which preceded it, originating in less subtle and dexterous talent took up a false position, professed a theory, and sunk under the obligations which it involved. The monstrous dogmas of the various Gnostic sects pass away from the scene of history as fast as they enter it. Sabellianism, which succeeded, also ventured on a creed; and vacillating between a similar wildness of doctrine, and a less imposing ambiguity, soon vanished in its turn.[b] But the Antiochene school, as represented by Paulus of Samosata and Arius, took the ground of an assailant, attacked the Catholic doctrine, and drew the attention of men to its difficulties, without attempting to furnish a theory of less perplexity or clearer evidence.

The arguments of Paulus, (which it is not to our purpose here to detail, (seem fairly to have overpowered the first of the Councils summoned against him, (A. D. 264) which dissolved without coming to a decision.[c] A second, and (according to some writers) a third, were successively convoked, when at length his subtleties were exposed and condemned; not, however, by the reasonings of the Fathers of the Council themselves, but by the instrumentality of one Malchion, a presbyter of Antioch, who, having been by profession a Sophist, encountered his adversary with his own arms. Even in yielding, the arts of the latter secured from his judges an ill-advised concession, the abandonment of the celebrated word ὁμοούσιον, afterwards adopted as the test of Nicæa; which the orthodox had employed in the controversy, and to which Paulus objected as open to a misinterpretation.[d] Arius followed in the track thus marked out by his predecessor. Turbulent by character, he is known in history as an offender against ecclesiastical order, before his agitation assumed the shape which has made his

[a] ἀνατηδῶσι γὰρ ὡς λυσσητῆρες κύνες εἰς ἰχθρῶν ἄμυναν. Epiph. Hær. lxix. 15. vid. the whole passage.

[b] Vide § 5, infra.

[c] Euseb. Hist. vii. 28. Cave Hist. Literar. vol. i. p. 158.

[d] Bull. Defens. Fid Nic. ii i. § 9—14.

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name familiar to posterity.[a] When he betook himself to the doctrinal controversy, he chose for the first open avowal of his heterodoxy the opportunity of an attack upon his diocesan, who was discoursing on the mystery of the Trinity to the clergy of Alexandria. Socrates who is far from being a partizan of the Catholics, informs us, that Arius being well skilled in dialectics sharply replied to the bishop, accused him of Sabellianism, and went on to *argue* that "*if* the Father begat the Son, certain conclusions would follow," and so proceeded. The heresy, thus founded in a syllogism, spread itself by instruments of a kindred character. First, we read of the excitement which his reasonings produced in Egypt and Libya; then of his letters addressed to Eusebius and to Alexander, which display a like pugnacious and almost satirical spirit; and then of his verses composed for the use of the populace in ridicule of the orthodox doctrine.[b] But afterwards, when the heresy was arraigned before the Nicene Council, and placed on the defensive, and later still, when its successes reduced it to the necessity of occupying the chairs of theology, it suffered the fate of the other dogmatic heresies before it; split, in spite of court favour, into at least four different creeds, in less than twenty years;[c] and at length gave way to the despised but indestructible truth which it had for a time obscured.

Its connexion with the Sophistical Schools.

Arianism had in fact a close connexion with the existing Aristotelic school. This might have been conjectured, even had there been no proof of the fact; adapted as that philosopher's logical system confessedly is to baffle an adversary, or at most to detect error, rather than to establish truth.[d] But we have actually reason in the circumstances of its history, for considering it as the offshoot of those schools of composition and debate, which acknowledged Aristotle as their principal authority, and were conducted by teachers who went by the name of Sophists. It was in these schools that the leaders of the heretical body were educated for the part assigned them in the troubles of the Church. The oratory of Paulus of Samosata is characterized by the distinguishing traits of the scholastic eloquence in the descriptive letter of the Council which condemned him; in which, moreover, he is stigmatised by the most disgraceful title to which a Sophist was exposed by the

[a] Epiph. Hær. lxix. 2.

[b] Socr. i. 5, 6. Theod. Hist. i. 5. Epiphan. Hær. lxix. 7, 8. Philostorg. ii. 2. Athan. de Decret. 16.

[c] Petav. Dogm. Theol. vol. ii. i. 9. [? cap. 10.]

[d] "Omnem vim venenorum suorum in dialectica disputatione constituunt, quæ philosophorum sententia definitur non adstruendi vim habere, sed studium destruendi. Sed non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum." Ambros. de fide, i. 5. [§. 42]

degraded exercise of his profession.[a] The skill of Arius in the art of disputation is well known. Asterius was a Sophist by profession. Aetius came from the school of an Aristotelian of Alexandria. Eunomius, his pupil, who re-constructed the Arian system on its primitive basis, at the end of the reign of Constantius, is represented by Ruffinus as "pre-eminent in dialectic power."[b] At a later period still, the like disputatious spirit and spurious originality are indirectly ascribed to the heterodox school, in the well known advice of Sisinnius to Nectarius of Constantinople, when the Emperor Theodosius required the latter to renew the controversy with a view to its final settlement.[c] Well versed in theological learning, and aware that cleverness in debate was the very life and weapon of heresy, Sisinnius proposed to the Patriarch, to drop the use of dialectics and merely challenge his opponents to utter a general anathema against all such Ante-Nicene Fathers as had taught what they themselves now denounced as false doctrine. On the experiment being tried, the heretics would neither consent to be tried by the opinions of the ancients, nor yet dared condemn those whom "all the people counted as prophets." "Upon this," say the historians who record the story, "the Emperor perceived that they rested their cause on their dialectic skill, and not on the testimony of the early Church."[d]

Abundant evidence, were more required, could be added to the above, in proof of the connexion of the Arians with the schools of heathen disputation. The two Gregories, Basil, Ambrose, and Cyril, protest with one voice against the dialectics of their opponents; and the sum of their declarations is briefly expressed by a writer of the 4th century, who calls Aristotle the Bishop of the Arians.[e]

Disputations in the Church.

And while the science of argumentation provided the means, their practice of disputing for the sake of exercise or amusement, supplied the temptation of assailing received opinions. This practice (ἐριστική) which had long prevailed in the schools, was early introduced into the Eastern Church.[f] It was there employed as a means of preparing the Christian teacher for the controversy with unbelievers. The discussion (γυμνασία) sometimes proceeded in the form of a lecture delivered by the master of the school to his pupils; sometimes in that of an

[a] σοφιστὴς καὶ γόης,—a mountebank Vid. Cressol. Theatr. Rhetor. i. 13. iii. 17.

[b] Petav. Theol. dogm. prolegom. iii. 3. Baltus Defense des Peres, ii. 19. Brucker, vol. iii. p. 288. Cave Hist. Literar. vol. 1.

[c] Bull. Defens. Fid. Nic. Epilog.

[d] Socr. Hist. v. 10. Soz. Hist. vii. 12.

[e] Petav. Dogm. Theol. supra. Brucker, vol. iii. pp. 324. 352. 353. Epiph. Hær lxix. 68. 19.

[f] Vid. Cressol Theatr. Rhet. ii. 3, &c.

inquiry, to be submitted to the criticism of the hearers; sometimes by way of dialogue, in which opposite sides were taken for argument sake. In some cases, it was taken down in notes by the by-standers, at the time; in others, committed to writing by the parties engaged in it.[a] Necessary as these exercises would be for the purpose designed, yet they were obviously open to abuse, though moderated by ever so orthodox and strictly scriptural a rule, in an age when no sufficient ecclesiastical symbol existed, as a guide to the memory and judgment of the eager disputant. It is evident, too, how difficult it would be to secure views or arguments from publicity, which were but hazarded in the confidence of Christian friendship, and which, when viewed apart from the circumstances of the case, lent a seemingly deliberate sanction to heterodox novelties. Athanasius implies,[b] that in the theological works of Origen and Theognostus, while the orthodox faith was explicitly maintained, nevertheless heretical tenets were discussed, and in their place more or less defended, by way of exercise in argument. The countenance thus accidentally given to the cause of error is evidenced in his eagerness to give the explanation. But far greater was the evil, when men destitute of religious seriousness and earnestness engaged in the like theological discussions, not with any definite ecclesiastical object, but as a mere trial of skill, or as a literary recreation; regardless of the mischief thus done to the simplicity of Christian morals, and the evil encouragement given to fallacious reasonings and sceptical views. The error of the ancient Sophists had consisted in their indulging without restraint or discrimination in the discussion of practical topics, whether religious or political, instead of selecting such as might exercise, without demoralizing, their minds. The rhetoricians of Christian times introduced the same error into their treatment of the highest and most sacred subjects of theology. We are told, that Julian commenced his opposition to the true faith by defending the heathen side of the question, in disputing with his brother Gallus;[c] and probably he would not have been able himself to assign the point of time, at which he ceased merely to take a part, and became earnest in his unbelief. But it is unnecessary to have recourse to particular instances, in order to prove the consequences of a practice so evidently destructive of a reverential and sober spirit.

Axioms assumed.

Moreover, in these theological discussions, the disputants were in danger of being misled by the unsoundness of the positions which they assumed, as elementary truths or axioms

[a] Dodw. diss. in Iren. v. 14. Socr. Hist i. 5

[b] Athan. de decret. 25. and 27.

[c] Greg. Nazianz. Orat. iii. 27. 31 [? iv. 30.]

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in the argument. As logic and rhetoric made them expert in proof and refutation, so there was much both in these and the other sciences, which formed a liberal education, geometry and arithmetic, to fix the mind on the contemplation of material objects, as if these could supply suitable tests and standards for examining those of a moral and spiritual nature. This is the risk which will ever accompany the cultivation of the intellectual powers, when the student is not at the same time alive to the fact, that there are truths foreign to the province of the most exercised talent; some of them the peculiar discoveries of the improved moral sense (or what Scripture terms *the spirit*) and others still less level with our reason, and received on the sole authority of revelation. Then, however, as now, the minds of speculative men were impatient of ignorance, and loth to confess that the laws of truth and falsehood, which their experience of this world furnished. could not at once be applied to measure and determine the facts of another. Accordingly, nothing was left for those who would not believe the incomprehensibility of the Divine Essence, but to conceive of it by the analogy of sense; and, using the figurative terms of theology. in their literal meaning, as if landmarks in their inquiries, to suppose, that then, and then only, they steered in a safe course, when they avoided every contradiction of a mathematical and material nature. Hence, canons, grounded on physics, were made the basis of discussions upon possibilities and impossibilities in a spiritual substance, as confidently and as fallaciously, as those which in modern times have been derived from the same false analogies against the existence of moral self-action or free-will. Thus the argument by which Paulus of Samosata baffled the Antiochene Council was drawn from a sophistical use of the very word *substance*, which the orthodox had employed in expressing the scriptural notion of the union subsisting between the Father and the Son.[a] Of the Arian reasonings, more will be said in the next chapter; for the present I will but extract Epiphanius's description of the Anomœans, the genuine offspring of the original stock. "Aiming," he says, "to exhibit the Divine Nature by means of Aristotelic syllogisms and *geometrical* data, they are naturally led on to declare that Christ is not the very Son of God." [b]

School of Artemas.

There was another Humanitarian school in the Ante-Nicene period, which has not yet been mentioned, and which will furnish additional illustration of the point before us. About the end of the second century, Theodotus, and after him, Artemas and others, taught at Rome what a contemporary calls a "God-denying doctrine." It matters not what was their exact creed concerning the Person of Christ; it is enough that they

[a] Bull Defens. F. N. ii. 1. § 10. [b] Epiph. Hær. p. 809.

considered Him to be a creature of God, and that they were led to do so on the ground of the physical difficulties which the Christian creed involves. The following is a passage from the ancient author referred to, which is preserved by Eusebius. After noticing their bold alterations of Scripture, and (what might have been cited above) their attachment to syllogistic forms of argument (i. e. to abstract reasonings in preference to the Scripture declarations), he proceeds, "Abandoning the inspired writings, they devote themselves to *geometry*, as becomes those who are of the earth, and speak of the earth, and are ignorant of Him Who is from above. Euclid's treatises, for instance, are zealously studied by some of them; Aristotle and Theophrastus are objects of their admiration; while Galen may be said even to be adored by others. It is needless to declare, that such *perverters of the sciences of unbelievers to the purposes of their own heresy*, such diluters of the simple Scripture faith with heathen subtleties, have no claim whatever to be called believers."[a]

Absence of ecclesiastical symbols.

Lastly, the absence of an adequate symbol of doctrine increased the evils thus existing, by affording an excuse, and sometimes a reason for investigations, the necessity of which had not yet been superseded by the authority of an ecclesiastical decision. The traditionary system, received from the first age of the Church, had been as yet but partially set forth in authoritative forms; and by the time of the Nicene Council, the voices of the Apostles were but faintly heard throughout Christendom, and might be plausibly disregarded by those who were unwilling to hear. Even before the middle of the 3d century, the disciples of Artemas boldly pronounced their heresy to be apostolical, and maintained that all the bishops of Rome had held it till Victor inclusive,[b] whose episcopate was but a few years before their own time. The progress of unbelief naturally led them on to disparage, rather than to appeal to their predecessors; and to trust their cause to their own ingenuity, instead of defending an inconvenient fiction concerning the opinions of a former age. It ended in teaching them to regard the ecclesiastical authorities of former times as on a level with the uneducated and unenlightened of their own days. Paulus did not scruple to express contempt for the received expositors of Scripture at Antioch; and it is one of the first accusations brought by Alexander against Arius and his party, that "they put themselves above the ancients, their own teachers, and the prelates of the day; considering themselves alone to be wise, and to have discovered truths, which had never been revealed to man before them."[c]

Unwillingness in the Church to impose them.

On the other hand, while the line of tradition, drawn out as

[a] Euseb. Hist. v. 28. [b] Ibid. [c] Theod Hist. i. 4.

it was, to the distance of two centuries from the Apostles, had at length become of too frail a texture, to resist the touch of subtle and ill-directed reason, the Church was naturally unwilling to have recourse to the novel, though necessary measure, of imposing an authoritative creed upon those whom it invested with the office of teaching. If I avow my belief, that freedom from symbols and articles, is abstractedly the highest state of Christian communion, and the peculiar privilege of the primitive Church, it is not from any tenderness towards that proud impatience of controul in which many exult, as in a virtue: but first, because technicality and formalism are, in their degree, inevitable results of public confessions of faith; and next, because when confessions do not exist, the mysteries of divine truth, instead of being exposed to the gaze of the profane and uninstructed, are kept hidden in the bosom of the Church, far more faithfully than is otherwise possible; and reserved by a private teaching, through the channel of her ministers, as rewards in due measure and season, for those who are prepared to profit by them; those, i. e. who are diligently passing through the successive stages of faith and obedience. And thus, while the Church is not committed to declarations, which, most true as they are, still are daily wrested by infidels to their ruin; on the other hand, much of that mischievous fanaticism is avoided, which at present abounds from the vanity of men, who think that they can explain the sublime doctrines and exuberant promises of the Gospel, before they have yet learned to know themselves, and to discern the holiness of God, under the preparatory discipline of the Law and of Natural Religion. Influenced, as we may suppose, by these various considerations, from reverence for the free spirit of Christian faith, and still more for the sacred truths which are the objects of it, and again from tenderness both for the heathen and the Neophyte, who were unequal to the reception of the strong meat of the full Gospel, the rulers of the Church were dilatory in applying a remedy, which nevertheless the circumstances of the times imperatively required. They were loth to confess, that the Church had grown too old to enjoy the free unsuspicious teaching with which her childhood was blest; and that her disciples must, for the future, calculate and reason before they spoke and acted. So much was this the case, that, in the Council of Antioch, (as has been said) they actually withdrew a test on the objection of Paulus, which was eventually adopted by the more experienced Fathers at Nicæa; and which, if then sanctioned, might, as far as the Church was concerned, have extinguished the heretical spirit in the very place of its birth.—Meanwhile, the adoption of Christianity, as the religion of the empire, augmented the evil consequences of this omission, excommunication becoming

more difficult, while entrance into the Church was not less restricted than before.

SECTION III.

THE CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA.

As the Church of Antioch was exposed to the influence of Judaism; so was the Alexandrian Church characterized in primitive times by its attachment to that comprehensive philosophy, which was reduced to system about the beginning of the third century, and then went by the name of the New Platonic, or Eclectic. A supposed resemblance between the Arian and the Eclectic doctrine concerning the Holy Trinity, has led to a common notion that, the Alexandrian Fathers were the medium by which a philosophical error was introduced into the Church; and this hypothetical cause of a disputable resemblance has been apparently evidenced by the solitary fact, which cannot be denied, that Arius himself was a presbyter of Alexandria. We have already seen, however that Arius was *educated* at Antioch; and we shall see hereafter that, so far from being favourably heard at Alexandria, he was, on the first promulgation of his heresy, expelled the Church in that city, and obliged to seek refuge among the Collucianists of Syria. And it is manifestly the opinion of Athanasius, that he was but the pupil or the tool of deeper men,[a] probably of Eusebius of Nicomedia, who in no sense belongs to Alexandria. But various motives have led theological writers to implicate this celebrated Church in the charge of heresy. Infidels have felt a satisfaction, and heretics have had an interest, in representing that the most learned Christian community did not submit implicitly to the theology taught in Scripture and by the Church; a conclusion, which, even if substantiated, would little disturb the enlightened defender of Christianity, who may safely admit that learning, though a powerful instrument of the truth in right hands, is no unerring guide to it. The Romanists, on the other hand, have thought by the same line of policy, to exalt the Apostolical purity of their own Church, by the contrast of unfaithfulness in its early rival; and (what is of greater importance) to insinuate the necessity of an infallible authority, by exaggerating the errors and contrarieties of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, and the fact of its existence, by throwing us upon the decisions of the subsequent Councils for the

[a] Athan. de decr. Nic. 8. 29; ad Monach. 66; de Synod. 22.

unequivocal statement of orthodox doctrine. In the following pages, I hope to clear the illustrious Church in question of the grave imputation thus directed against her from opposite quarters; the imputation of considering the Son of God by nature inferior to the Father, i. e. of platonizing or arianizing. But I have no need to profess myself her disciple, though, as regards the doctrine in debate, I might well do so; and, instead of setting about any formal defence, I will merely place before the reader the general principles of her teaching, and leave it to him to apply them, as far as he judges they will go, in explanation of the language, which has been the ground of the suspicions against her.

Character of the Alexandrian Church.

St. Mark, the founder of the Alexandrian Church, may be numbered among the personal friends and associates of that Apostle, who held it to be his especial office to proselyte the heathen; an office, which was impressed upon the community formed by the Evangelist, with a strength and permanence unknown in the other primitive Churches. The Alexandrian may peculiarly be called, the Missionary and Polemical Church of antiquity. Situated in the centre of the accessible world, and on the extremity of Christendom, in a city which was at once the chief mart of commerce, and a celebrated seat of both Jewish and Greek philosophy, it was supplied in especial abundance, both with materials and instruments prompting to the exercise of Christian zeal. Its catechetical school, founded, (it is said) by the Evangelist himself, was a pattern to other Churches in its diligent and systematic preparation of candidates for baptism; while other institutions were added of a controversial character, for the purpose of carefully examining into the doctrines revealed in Scripture, and of cultivating the habit of argument and disputation.[a] While the internal affairs of the community were administered by the bishops, on these academical bodies, as subsidiary to the divinely-sanctioned system, devolved the defence and propagation of the faith, under the presidency of laymen or inferior ecclesiastics. Athenagoras, the first recorded master of the catechetical school, is known by his defence of the Christians, still extant, addressed to the Emperor Marcus. Pantænus, who succeeded him, was sent by Demetrius, at that time bishop, as missionary to the Indians or Arabians. Origen, who was soon after appointed catechist at the early age of eighteen, had already given the earnest of his future celebrity, by his persuasive disputations with the unbelievers of Alexandria. Afterwards he appeared in the character of a Christian apologist before an Arabian prince, and Mammæa, the mother of Alexander Severus, and addressed letters on the subject of religion to

[a] Cave Hist. Literar. vol. i. p. 80.

the Emperor Philip and his wife Severa; and he was known far and wide in his day, for his indefatigable zeal and ready services in the confutation of heretics, for his various controversial and critical writings, and for the number and dignity of his converts.[a]

Its exoteric teaching.

1. Proselytism, then, in all its branches, the apologetic, the polemical, and the didactic, being the peculiar function of the Alexandrian Church, it is manifest that the writings of its theologians would partake largely of an exoteric character. I mean, that they would be written, not with the openness of Christian familiarity, but with the caution and reserve with which we are accustomed to address those who do not sympathise with us, or whom we fear to mislead or to prejudice against the truth, by precipitate disclosures of it. The example of the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was their authority for making a broad distinction between the doctrines suitable to the state of the weak and ignorant, and those which are the peculiar property of a baptized and regenerate Christian. The Apostle in that Epistle, when speaking of the most sacred Christian verities, as hidden under the allegories of the Old Testament, seems suddenly to check himself, from the apprehension that he was divulging mysteries beyond the understanding of his brethren; who, instead of being masters in Scripture doctrine, were not yet versed even in its elements, needed the nourishment of children rather than of grown men; nay, perchance, having quenched the illumination of baptism, had forfeited the capacity of comprehending even the first principles of the truth. In the same place (Heb. v. 11. vi. 6.) he enumerates these elements, or foundation of Christian teaching, (τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ λόγος,) in contrast with the esoteric doctrines which the "long exercised habit of moral discernment" can alone appropriate and enjoy, as follows:—repentance, faith in God, the doctrinal meaning of the rite of baptism, confirmation as the channel of miraculous gifts, the future resurrection, and the final separation of good and bad. His first Epistle to the Corinthians contains the same distinction between the carnal or imperfect and the established Christian, which is laid down in that addressed to the Hebrews. While he maintains that in Christianity is contained a largeness of wisdom, or (to speak human language) a profound philosophy, fulfilling those vague conceptions of greatness, which had led the aspiring intellect of the heathen sages to shadow forth their unreal systems, he at the same time insists upon the impossibility of man's arriving at this hidden treasure all at once, and warns them, instead of attempting to cross by a short path from the false to the true knowledge, to humble themselves to the low and narrow portal of

[a] Philipp. Sidet. fragm. apud Dodw. in Iren. Huet. Origen.

the heavenly temple, and to become fools, that they may at length be really wise. As before, he speaks of the difference of doctrine suited respectively to neophytes and confirmed Christians, under the analogy of the difference of food proper for the old and young: which arises, not from the arbitrary will of the Dispenser, but from the necessity of the case, the more sublime truths of revelation affording no nourishment to the souls of the unbelieving or unstable.

The Catechetical Schools.

Accordingly, in the system of the early catechetical schools, the τέλειοι, or men in Christ, were such as had deliberately taken upon them the profession of believers; had made the vows, and received the grace of baptism; and were admitted to all the privileges and the revelations of which the Church had been constituted the dispenser. But before reception into this full discipleship, a previous season of preparation, from two to three years, was enjoined, in order to try their obedience, and instruct them in the principles of revealed truth. During this introductory discipline, they were called *Catechumens*, and the teaching itself *Catechetical*, from the careful and systematic examination by which their grounding in the faith was effected.[a] The matter of the instruction thus communicated to them, varied with the time of their discipleship, advancing from the most simple principles of natural religion to the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, from moral truths to the Christian mysteries. On their first admission they were denominated ἀκροώμενοι, (audientes,) from the leave granted them to attend the reading of the Scriptures and sermons in the Church. Afterwards, being allowed to stay during the prayers, and receiving the imposition of hands as the sign of their progress in spiritual knowledge, they were called γονυκλίνοντες, or εὐχόμενοι. Lastly, some short time before their baptism, they were taught the Lord's Prayer, (the peculiar privilege of the regenerate,) were intrusted with the knowledge of the Creed; and as destined for incorporation into the body of believers, received the titles of Competentes, Electi, or φωτιζόμενοι. Even to the last, they were granted nothing beyond a formal and general account of the articles of the Christian faith; the exact and fully developed doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation; and still more, the doctrine of the Atonement, as once made upon the cross, and commemorated and appropriated in the Eucharist, being the exclusive possession of the serious and practised Christian. On the other hand, the chief subjects of catechisings, as we learn from Cyril,[b] were the doctrines of repentance and pardon, of the necessity of good works, of the

[a] Bingham, Antiq. book x. Suicer. Thes. in verb. κατηχέω.
[b] Bingham, Antiq. book x.

nature and use of baptism, and the immortality of the soul;—as the Apostle had determined them.

Public preaching.

The exoteric teaching, thus observed in the Catechetical schools, was still more appropriate, when the Christian teacher addressed himself, not to the instruction of willing hearers, but to controversy or public preaching. There are very many sincere Christians of the present day, who consider that the evangelical doctrines are the appointed instruments of conversion, and, as such exclusively attended with the Divine blessing. In proof of this position, with an inconsistency remarkable in those who profess a jealous adherence to the inspired text, and are not slow to accuse others of ignorance of its contents, they appeal, not to Scripture, but to the stirring *effects* of this (so-called) Gospel preaching, and the inefficiency, on the other hand, of mere exhortations respecting the benevolence and mercy of God, the necessity of repentance, the rights of conscience, and the obligation of obedience. But it is scarcely the attribute of a generous faith, to be anxiously inquiring into the consequences of this or that system, with a view to decide its admissibility instead of turning at once to the revealed word, and inquiring into the view there exhibited to us. God can defend and vindicate His own command, whatever it turn out to be; weak though it seem to our vain wisdom, and unworthy of the Giver; and that His course in this instance is really that which the hasty religionist condemns, as if the theory of unenlightened formalists, is evident to careful students of Scripture, and is confirmed by the practice of the Primitive Church. Here, I shall but observe, in addition to the remarks already made on the passages in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Hebrews, that no one sanction can be adduced from Scripture, whether of precept or of example, in behalf of the practice of stimulating the affections, (e. g. gratitude or remorse,) by means of the doctrine of the atonement, in order to the conversion of the hearers;—that, on the contrary, it is its uniform method to connect the gospel with natural religion, and to mark out obedience to the moral law as the ordinary means of attaining to a Christian faith, the higher truths, as well as the Eucharist, which is the visible emblem of them, being received as the reward and confirmation of habitual piety;—that, in the preaching of the Apostles and Evangelists in the Book of Acts, the sacred mysteries are revealed to individuals in proportion to their actual religious proficiency; the first principles of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, are urged upon Felix; while the elders of Ephesus are reminded of the divinity and vicarious sacrifice of Christ, and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the Church;—lastly, that among those converts, who were made the chief instruments of the first propagation of the gospel, or

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who are honoured with especial favour in Scripture, none are found who had not been faithful to the light already given them, and distinguished, previous to their conversion, by a strictly conscientious deportment. Such are the divine notices given to those who desire an apostolical rule for dispensing the word of life: and as such, the ancient Fathers received them. They received them as the fulfilment of our Lord's command, not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor to cast pearls before swine; a text cited (e. g.) by Clement and Tertullian,[a] among others, in justification of their cautious distribution of sacred truth. They considered them also as the result of the most truly charitable consideration for those whom they addressed, who were likely to be perplexed, not converted, by the sudden exhibition of the whole evangelical scheme. This is the doctrine of Theodoret, Chrysostom, and others, in their comments upon Heb. v. 12.[b] "Should a catechumen ask thee what the teachers have determined, (says Cyril of Jerusalem,) tell nothing to one who is without. For we impart to thee a secret and a promise of the world to come. Keep safe the secret for Him Who gives the reward. Listen not to one who asks, 'What harm is there in my knowing also?' Even the sick ask for wine, which, unseasonably given, brings on delirium; and so there come two ills, the death of the patient and the disrepute of the physician." In another place he says, "All may hear the gospel, but the glory of the gospel is set apart for the true disciples of Christ. To all who could hear, the Lord spake, but in parables; to His disciples He privately explained them. What is the blaze of Divine glory to the enlightened, is the blinding of unbelievers. These are the secrets which the Church unfolds to him who passes on from the catechumens, and not to the heathen. For we do not unfold to a heathen the truths concerning Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; nay, not even in the case of catechumens do we clearly explain the mysteries, but we frequently say many things indirectly, so that believers who have been taught may understand, and the others may not be injured."[c]

Clement's Stromata.

The work of St. Clement of Alexandria, called Stromata, or Tapestry-work, from the variety of its contents, well illustrates the primitive Church's method of instruction, as far as regards the educated portion of the community. It had the distinct object of interesting and conciliating the learned heathen who perused it; but it also exemplifies the peculiar caution then adopted by Christians in teaching the truth; their desire to rouse the moral powers to internal voluntary action, and their dread of loading or formalizing the mind. In the opening of

[a] Ceillier, Apol. des Peres, ch. ii. Bingham. Antiq. x. 5.
[b] Suicer, Thes. in verb. στοιχεῖον. [c] Cyril. Hieros. præf. § 7 catech. vi. 16.

his work, Clement speaks of his miscellaneous discussions as mingling truth with philosophy; "or rather," he continues, "involving and concealing it, as the shell hides the real fruit of the nut." In another place he compares them, not to a fancy-garden, but to some thickly-wooded mountain, where trees of every sort, growing promiscuously, conceal, by their very number, those that are fruitful from the plunderer, while the experienced labourer may select and make use of the latter. "Do not therefore expect," he warns his reader, "method or precision in this work. My design being to hide my subject, none but the intelligent, and the sharp-sighted, and the sincere inquirer, will be able to enter into it. By this artifice also I shall baffle the perverse, who think to overbear the truth by the very stoutness of their unbelief; answering fools according to their folly. And on the other hand, I shall stimulate the well-instructed mind to search it out in that narrow way of care and pain, by which alone we are carried on to Christian knowledge and blessedness."[a] The Fathers considered that they had the pattern as well as the recommendation of this procedure in Scripture itself.[b]

Disciplina arcani

This self-restraint and abstinence, practised, at least partially, by the Primitive Church in the publication of the most sacred doctrines of our religion, are termed, in theological language, the *disciplina arcani;* concerning which a few remarks may here be added, not so much in recommendation of it, (which is beside my purpose,) as to prevent misconception of its principle and limits.

though the Scriptures public,

Now first, it may be asked, how was any secresy practicable, seeing that the Scriptures were open to every one who chose to consult them. It may startle those who are but acquainted with the popular writings of this day, yet, I believe, the most accurate consideration of the subject will lead us to acquiesce in the statement, as a general truth, that the doctrines in question have never been learned merely from Scripture. Surely the sacred volume was never intended, and is not adapted to *teach* us our creed: however certain it is that we can *prove* our creed from it, when it has once been taught us,[c] and in spite of individual produceable exceptions to the general rule. From the very first, that rule has been, as a matter of fact, for the Church to teach the truth, and then appeal to Scripture in vindication of its own teaching. And from the

[a] Strom. i. 1; v. 3; vi. 1. vii. 18.

[b] "Bonæ sunt in Scripturis sacris mysteriorum profunditates, quæ ob hoc teguntur, ne vilescant; ob hoc quæruntur, ut exerceant; ob hoc autem aperiuntur, ut pascant." (Austin in Petav. præf. in Trin. i. 5.) [Prosper. Sent. 67. ex Aug. (opp. Aug. t. 10 App. 3. 228 A.) in Ps. 140 § 1 t. 4. 1562 E.]

[c] Vide Dr. Hawkins's original and most conclusive work on Unauthoritative Tradition, which contains in it the key to a number of difficulties which are apt to perplex the theological student.

first, it has been the error of heretics to neglect the information provided for them, and to attempt of themselves a work to which *they* are unable, the eliciting a systematic doctrine from the scattered notices of the truth which Scripture contains. Such men act, in the solemn concerns of religion, the part of the self-sufficient natural philosopher, who should obstinately reject Newton's theory of gravitation, and endeavour, with talents inadequate to the task, to strike out some theory of motion by himself. The insufficiency of the mere private study of Holy Scripture for arriving at the exact and entire truth which it really contains, is shown by the fact, that creeds and teachers have ever been divinely provided, and by the discordance of opinions which exists wherever those aids are thrown aside; as well as by the very structure of the Bible itself. And if this be so, it follows that, while inquirers and neophytes used the inspired writings for the purposes of morals and for instruction in the rudiments of the faith, they still might need the teaching of the Church as a key to the collection of passages which related to the mysteries of the Gospel: passages which are obscure from the necessity of combining and receiving them all.

and though apologies explicit.

A more plausible objection to the existence of this rule of secrecy in the Early Church, arises from the circumstance, that the Christian Apologies openly mention to the whole world the sacred tenets which have been above represented as the peculiar possession of the confirmed believer. But it must be observed, that the writers of these were frequently laymen, and so did not commit the Church as a body, nor even in its separate authorities, to formal statement or to theological discussion. The great duty of the Christian teacher was to unfold the sacred truths in due order, and not to insist prematurely on the difficulties, or to apply the promises of the gospel; and if others erred in this respect, still it remained a duty to him. And further, these disclosures were not so conclusive as they seem to be at first sight; the approximations of philosophy, and the corruptions of heresy, being so considerable, as to create a confusion concerning the precise character of the ecclesiastical doctrine. Besides, in matter of fact, some of the early apologists themselves, as Tatian, were tainted with heretical opinions.

Limits of the disciplina.

But in truth, it is not the actual practice of the Primitive Church, which I am concerned with, so much as its principle. Men often break through the rules, which they set themselves for the conduct of life, with or without good reason. If it was the professed principle of the early teachers, to speak exoterically to those who were without the Church, instances of a contrary practice but prove their inconsistency; whereas the fact of the existence of the principle answers the purpose which

is the ultimate aim of this discussion, viz. accounts for those instances in the teaching of the Alexandrians, whether many or few, and whether extant or not as writings, in which they were silent as regards the mysterious doctrines of Christianity. Indeed it is evident, that any how the *disciplina arcani* could not be observed for any long time in the Church. Apostates would reveal the doctrines, if these escaped in no other way. Perhaps it was almost abandoned, as far as men of letters were concerned, after the date of Ammonius; indeed there are various reasons for limiting its strict enforcement to the end of the second century. And it is plain, that during the time when the sacred doctrines were passing into the stock of public knowledge, Christian controversialists would be in a difficulty how to conduct themselves, what to deny, explain or complete, in the popular notions of their creed; and they would consequently be betrayed into inconsistencies of statement, and vary in their method of disputing.

The secret tradition not untrue.

The *disciplina arcani* being supposed to have had a real existence with these limitations, I observe further, in explanation of its principle, that the elementary information given to the heathen or catechumen was in no sense undone by the subsequent secret teaching, which was in fact but the filling up of a bare but correct outline. The contrary theory was maintained by the Manichees, who represented the initiatory discipline as founded on a fiction or hypothesis, which was to be forgotten by the learner as he made progress in the real doctrine of the gospel;[a] somewhat after the manner of a school in the present day, which supposes conversion to be effected by an exhibition of free promises and threats, and an appeal to our moral capabilities, which after conversion are discovered to have no foundation in truth. "Sed absit," says Augustine, speaking of such, "ut tantus Christi Apostolus, vas à Deo electum, Spiritûs Sancti organum, alius docendo, alius scribendo, alius clam, alius palam fuerit. Factus est quidem omnibus omnia, non fallentis astu, sed compatientis affectu, diversis animarum morbis, diversis misericordiarum affectibus subveniens; dans scilicet *parvulis parva, non falsa*, perfectis verò grandiora mysteria, *cuncta autem vera, consona et divina*."[b]

Next, the truths reserved for the baptised Christian, were not put forward as the arbitrary determinations of individuals, as the word of man, but rather as an *apostolical legacy*, preserved and dispensed by the Church. Thus Irenæus when

[a] Aust. in advers. leg. et proph. lib. ii.

[b] Vid. Feuard. in Iren. iii. 2. Mosheim quotes this passage word for word in his diss. de caus. supp. libror. §. 17. Does it occur in this exact form *any where* in Austin's treatise? vid. in advers. leg. et proph. lib. ii. 4. 6. &c.

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engaged in refuting the heretics of his age, who appealed from the text of Scripture to a sense independent of it, as the test between truth and falsehood in its contents, says, "We derive the doctrine of our salvation through none but those who have transmitted to us the gospel, *first preaching it*, then (through God's mercy) delivering it to us in the Scriptures, as a basis and pillar of our faith. Nor dare we affirm, that their statements were made previously to their attaining perfect knowledge, as some presume to say, boasting that they amend the Apostles."[a] He then proceeds to speak of the clearness and cogency of the traditions preserved in the Church, as containing that true wisdom of the perfect, of which St. Paul speaks, and to which the Gnostics pretended. And, indeed, without formal proofs of the existence and the authority in primitive times of an apostolical tradition, it is plain that there must have been such tradition, granting that the Apostles conversed, and their friends had memories, like other men. It is quite inconceivable that they should not have been led to arrange the series of revealed doctrines more systematically than they record them in Scripture, as soon as their converts became exposed to the attacks and misrepresentations of heretics; unless they were forbidden so to do, a supposition which cannot be maintained. Their statements thus occasioned would be preserved, as a matter of course; together with those other secret but less important truths, to which St. Paul seems to allude, and which the early writers more or less acknowledge, whether concerning the types of the Jewish Church, or the prospects of the Christian.[b] And such recollections of apostolical teaching would evidently be binding on the faith of those who were instructed in them; unless it can be supposed, that, though coming from inspired teachers, they were not of divine origin.

and subordinate to Scripture.

However, it must not be supposed, that this appeal to tradition in the slightest degree disparages the sovereign authority and sufficiency of Holy Scripture, as a record of the truth. In the passage from Irenæus above cited, apostolical tradition is brought forward, not to supersede Scripture, but in conjunction with Scripture, to refute the self-authorised arbitrary doctrines of the heretics. We must cautiously distinguish, with that Father, between a tradition supplanting or perverting the inspired records, and a corroborating, illustrating, and altogether subordinate tradition. It is of the latter that he speaks, classing the traditionary and the written doctrine together, as substantially one and the same, and as each equally opposed to the profane inventions of Valentinus and Marcion.

[a] Iren iii. 1. Vid. also Tertull. de Præscr. Hæret. 22.
[b] Mosheim, de reb ante Const. sæc. ii. §. 34.

Its termination.

Lastly, the secret tradition soon ceased to exist even in theory. It was authoritatively divulged, and perpetuated in the form of symbols according as the successive innovations of heretics called for its publication. In the creeds of the early Councils, it may be considered as having come to light, and so ended; so that whatever has not been thus authenticated, whether such was prophetical information, (2. Thess. ii. 5. 15.) or comment on the past dispensations, (Heb. v. 11.) is from the circumstances of the case, lost to the Church. What, however, was then (by God's good providence) seasonably preserved, is in some sense of apostolical authority still; and at least serves the chief office of the early traditions, viz. that of interpreting and harmonizing the statements of Scripture.

Allegorizing

2. In the passages lately quoted from Clement and Cyril, mention was made by those writers of a mode of speaking, which was intelligible to the well-instructed, but conveyed no definite meaning to ordinary hearers. This was the allegorical style; which well deserves our attention before we leave the subject of the *disciplina arcani*, as being one chief means by which it was observed. The word *allegorism* must here be understood in a wide signification; as including in its meaning, not only the representation of truths, under an independent, though analogous exterior, after the manner of our Lord's parables, but the generalizing facts into principles, adumbrating greater truths under the image of lesser, implying the consequences or the basis of doctrines in their correlatives, and altogether those instances of thinking, reasoning, and teaching, which depend upon the assumption of propositions which are abstruse, and connexions which are obscure, and which, in the case of uninspired authors, we consider profound, or poetical, or enthusiastic, or illogical, according to our opinion of those by whom they are exhibited.

Its history.

This method of writing was the national peculiarity of that literature in which the Alexandrian Church was educated. The hieroglyphics of the ancient Egyptians mark the antiquity of a practice, which, in a later age, being enriched and diversified by the genius of their Greek conquerors, was applied as a key both to mythological legends, and to the sacred truths of Scripture. The Stoics were the first to avail themselves of an expedient which smoothed the deformities of the Pagan creed. The Jews, and then the Christians of Alexandria, employed it in the interpretation of the inspired writings. Those writings themselves have certainly an allegorical structure, and seem to countenance and invite an allegorical interpretation, and in consequence, they have been referred by some critics to the same heathen origin, as if Moses first, and then St. Paul, borrowed their emblematical system respectively from the Egyptian and the Alexandrian philosophy.

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How originating. Adopted in Scripture.

But it is more natural to consider that the Divine Wisdom used on the sublimest of all subjects, media, which we spontaneously select for the expression of solemn thought and elevated emotion; and had no especial regard to the practice in any particular country, which afforded but an instance of the operation of a general principle of our nature. When the mind is occupied by some vast and awful subject of contemplation, it is prompted to give utterance to its feelings in a figurative style; for ordinary words will not convey the admiration, nor literal words the reverence which possesses it; and when dazzled at length with the great sight, it turns away for relief, it still catches in every new object, which it encounters, glimpses of its former vision, and colours the whole range of thought with this one abiding association. If however, others have preceded it in the privilege of such contemplations, a well disciplined piety will lead it to adopt the images which they have invented, both from affection for what is familiar to it, and from a fear of using unsanctioned language on a sacred subject. Such are the feelings under which a deeply impressed fancy addresses itself to the task of disclosing even its human thoughts; and the description, if we may dare to conjecture, in its measure applies to the case of a mind under the immediate influence of inspiration. Certainly, its contents favour some such hypothetical account of the structure of the sacred volume; in which the divinely-instructed imagination of the writers is ever glancing to and fro, connecting past things with future, illuminating God's lower providences, and man's humblest services by allusions to the relations of the evangelical covenant, and then in turn suddenly leaving the latter to dwell upon those past dealings of God with man, which must not be forgotten merely because they have been excelled. No prophet ends his subject: his brethren after him renew, enlarge, transfigure, or reconstruct it; so that the Bible, though various in its parts, forms a whole, grounded on a few distinct doctrinal principles discernible throughout it; and is in consequence, though intelligible in its general drift, yet obscure in its text; and even tempts the student to a lax and disrespectful interpretation of it. History is made the external garb of prophecy, and persons and facts become the figures of heavenly things. I need only refer, by way of instance, to the delineation of Abraham as the type of the accepted worshipper of God; the history of the brazen serpent; the prophetical bearing of the "call of Israel out of Egypt;" the personification of the Church in the Apostolic Epistles as the reflected image of Christ; and, further, to the mystical import, interpreted by our Lord Himself, of the title of God as the God of the Patriarchs. Above all other subjects, it need scarcely be said, the likeness of the promised Mediator

is conspicuous throughout the sacred volume as in a picture; moving along the line of the history, in one or other of His destined offices, the dispenser of blessings in Joseph, the inspired interpreter of truth in Moses, the conqueror in Joshua, the active preacher in Samuel, the suffering combatant in David, and in Solomon the triumphant and glorious king.

Scripture purposes of the allegory

Moreover, Scripture assigns the same uses to this allegorical style, which were contemplated by the Fathers when they made it subservient to the *disciplina arcani*;[a] viz. those of trying the earnestness and patience of inquirers, discriminating between the proud and the humble, and conveying instruction to believers, and that in the most permanently impressive manner, without the world's catching its meaning. Our Lord's remarks on the design of His own parables, is a sufficient evidence of this intention

Canon for its use

Thus there seemed every encouragement, from the structure of the sacred volume, from the apparent causes which led to that structure, and from the purposes to which it was applied by its divine Author, to induce the Alexandrians to use its text as the instrument of an allegorical teaching. And, while it gave them the example of allegorizing itself, yet they would not consider themselves bound strictly within the limits of the very instances therein found, from the evident second meaning of some passages which yet are not interpreted; e g, the narrative contained in Genesis xxii., to which few people will deny an evangelical import, though the New Testament itself nowhere assigns it. Yet, on the other hand, granting that a certain liberty of interpretation, beyond the precedent, but according to the spirit of Scripture, be allowable in the Christian teacher, still few people will deny, that some rule is necessary as a safeguard against its abuse, to secure the sacred text from being explained away by the heretic, and misquoted and perverted by weak or fanatical minds. Such a safeguard we shall find in bearing cautiously in mind this principle: viz. that (as a general rule), every passage of Scripture has some one definite and sufficient sense, which was prominently before the mind of the writer, or in the intention of the Blessed Spirit, and to which all other thoughts, though they might arise, or be implied, still were subordinate. It is this true meaning of the text, which it is the business of the expositor to unfold. This it is, which every diligent student will think it a great gain to discover; and, though he will not shut his eyes to the indirect and instructive applications of which the text is capable, he never will so reason as to forget that there is *a* sense peculiarly its own. Sometimes it is easily ascertained, sometimes it can be scarcely conjectured; sometimes it is con

[a] Clem Strom v 12

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tained in the *literal* sense of the words employed, as in the historical parts; sometimes it is the *allegorical*, as in our Lord's parables; or sometimes the secondary sense may be more important in after ages than the original, as in the instance of the Jewish ritual; still in all cases (to speak generally) there is but one main primary sense, whether literal or figurative; a regard for which, must ever keep us sober and reverent in the employment of those allegorisms, which, nevertheless, our Christian liberty does not altogether forbid.

Caution of Scripture in using it.

The protest of Scripture against all careless expositions of its meaning, is strikingly implied in the extreme reserve and caution, with which it unfolds its own typical signification; e. g. in the Mosaic ritual no hint was given of its undoubted prophetical character, lest an excuse should be furnished to the Israelitish worshipper for undervaluing its actual commands. So, again, the secondary and distinct meaning of prophecy, is commonly hidden from view by the veil of the literal text, lest its immediate scope should be overlooked; when that is once fulfilled, the recesses of the sacred language seem to open, and give up the further truths deposited in them. Our Lord, probably, in the prophecy recorded in the gospels, was not careful, (if I may so express myself,) that His disciples should distinguish between His final and immediate coming; thinking it a less error that they should consider the last day approaching, than that they should forget their own duties in the contemplation of the future fortunes of the Church. Nay, even types fulfilled, if they be historical, seem sometimes purposely to be left without the sanction of an interpretation, lest we should neglect the instruction still conveyed in the literal narrative. This accounts for the silence observed concerning the evangelical import of the sacrifice of Isaac, which contains a definite and permanent moral lesson, as a matter of fact, however clear may be its further meaning as emblematical of our Lord's sufferings on the cross. In corroboration of this remark, let it be observed, that there seems to have been in the Church a traditionary explanation of these historical types, derived from the Apostles, but kept among the secret doctrines, as being dangerous to the majority of hearers;[a] and certainly St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews, affords us an instance of such a tradition, both as existing and as secret, (even though it be shown to be of Jewish origin,) when first checking himself and questioning his brethren's faith, he communicates not without hesitation, the evangelical scope of the account of Melchisedec, as introduced into the book of Genesis.

Alexandrian allegorizing

As to the Christian school of Alexandria, if it erred in its use

[a] Vid Mosheim de reb ant Const. sæc ii. § 34. Rosenmuller Hist. Interpr. iii 2 § 1

of the allegory, its error did not lie in the mere adoption of an instrument which Philo or the Egyptian hierophants had employed, (though this is sometimes made a ground of objection,) for Scripture itself had taken it out of the hands of such authorities. Nor did its error lie in the mere circumstances of its allegorizing Scripture, where Scripture gave no direct countenance; as if we might not interpret the sacred word for ourselves, as we interpret the events of life, by the principles which itself supplies. But it erred, whenever and as far as it carried its favourite rule of exposition beyond the spirit of the canon above laid down, so as to obscure the primary meaning of Scripture, and to weaken the force of historical facts and express declarations; and much more, if at any time it degraded the inspired text to the office of conveying the thoughts of uninspired teachers on subjects not sacred.

And, as it is impossible to draw a precise line between the use and abuse of allegorizing, so it is impossible also to ascertain the exact degree of blame incurred by individual teachers who seem to transgress it. They may be faulty as *commentators*, yet instructive as *devotional writers;* and their liberty in interpretation is to be regulated by the state of mind in which they address themselves to the work, and by their proficiency in the knowledge and practice of Christian duty. So far as men use the language of the Bible, (as is often done in poems and works of fiction,) as the mere instrument of a cultivated fancy, to make their style attractive or impressive, so far, it is needless to say, they are guilty of a great irreverence towards its Divine Author. On the other hand, it is surely no extravagance to assert that there are minds so gifted and disciplined as to approach the position occupied by the inspired writers, and therefore able to apply their words with a fitness, and are entitled to do so with a freedom, which is unintelligible to the dull or heartless criticism of inferior understandings. So far then as the Alexandrian Fathers partook of such a singular gift of grace (and Origen surely bears on him the tokens of some exalted moral dignity,) not incited by a capricious and presumptuous imagination, but burning with that vigorous faith, which, seeing God in all things, does and suffers all for His sake, and, while filled with the contemplation of His supreme glory, still discharges each command in the exactness of its real meaning, in the same degree they stand not merely excused, but are placed immeasurably above the multitude of those who find it so easy to censure them.— And so much on the Allegory, as the means of observing the *disciplina arcani.*

Second use of the Allegory

3. The same method of interpretation was used for another purpose, which is more open to censure. When Christian controversialists were urged by objections to various passages

in the history of the Old Testament, as derogatory to the Divine Perfections or to the Jewish saints, they had recourse to an allegorical explanation by way of answer. Thus Origen spiritualizes the account of Abraham's denying his wife, the polygamy of the Patriarchs, and Noah's drunkenness.[a] It is impossible to defend such a procedure, which seems to imply a want of faith in those who had recourse to it. Doubtless this earnestness te exculpate the saints of the elder covenant, is partly to be attributed to a noble jealousy for the honour of God, and a reverence for the memory of those who, on the whole, rise in their moral attainments far above their fellows, and well deserve the confidence in their virtue which the Alexandrians manifest. Yet God has given us rules of right and wrong, which we must not be afraid to apply in estimating the conduct of even the best of mere men: though errors are thereby detected, the scandal of which we ourselves have to bear in our own day. So far must be granted in fairness: but some have gone on to censure the *principle* itself which this procedure involved: viz. that of representing religion, for the purpose of conciliating the heathen, in the form most attractive to their prejudices: and, as it was generally received in the Primitive Church, and the considerations which it involves are not without their bearings upon the doctrinal question in which we shall be presently engaged, I will devote some space here to the examination of it.

The Economy.

The mode of arguing and teaching in question, which is called *economical*, κατ' οἰκονομίαν by the ancients, can scarcely be disconnected from the *disciplina arcani*, as will appear by some of the instances which follow, though it is convenient to consider it by itself. If it is necessary to contrast the two with each other, the one may be considered as withholding the truth, and the other as setting it out to advantage. The economy is certainly sanctioned by St. Paul in his own conduct. To the Jews he became as a Jew, and as without the Law to the heathen. His behaviour at Athens is the most remarkable instance in his history of this method of acting. Instead of uttering any invective against their Polytheism, he began a discourse upon the Unity of the Divine Nature; and then proceeded to claim the altar, consecrated in the neighbourhood to the unknown God, as the property of Him Whom he preached to them, and to enforce his doctrine of the Divine Immateriality, not by miracles, but by argument, and that founded on the words of a heathen poet. This was the example which the Alexandrians set before them in their intercourse with the heathen, as may be shown by the following instances.

[a] Huet. Origen. p. 171 Rosenmuller. supra.

Instance. Theonas.

Theonas, Bishop of Alexandria, (A. D. 282—300.) has left his directions for the behaviour of Christians who were in the service of the imperial court. The utmost caution is enjoined them, not to give offence to the heathen emperor. If a Christian was appointed librarian, he was to take good care not to show any contempt for secular knowledge and the ancient writers. He was advised to make himself familiar with the poets, philosophers, orators, and historians of classical literature; and, while discussing their writings, to take incidental opportunities of recommending the Scriptures, introducing mention of Christ, and by degrees revealing the real dignity of His nature. "Insurgere poterit Christi mentio, explicabitur paullatim ejus sola divinitas."[a]

Origen.

The conversion of Gregory of Neocæsarea, (A. D. 231.) affords an exemplification of this procedure in an individual case. He had originally attached himself to the study of rhetoric and the law, but was persuaded by Origen, whose lectures he attended, to exchange these pursuits, first for science, then for philosophy, then for theology, so far as right notions concerning religion could be extracted from the promiscuous writings of the various philosophical sects. Thus, while professedly teaching him Pagan philosophy, his skilful master insensibly enlightened him in the knowledge of the Christian faith. Then leading him to Scripture, he explained to him its difficulties as they arose; till Gregory, overcome by the force of truth, announced to his instructor his intention of exchanging the pursuits of this world for the service of God.[b]

Clement.

Clement's Stromata, (A. D. 200.) a work which has already furnished us with illustrations of the Alexandrian method of teaching, was written with the design of converting the learned heathen, and pursues the same plan which Origen adopted towards Gregory. The author therein professes his wish to blend together philosophy and religion, refutes those who censure the former; shows the advantage of it, and how it is to be applied. This leading at once to an inquiry concerning the particular school of philosophy which is to be held of divine origin, he answers in a celebrated passage, that all are to be referred thither as far as they respectively inculcate the principles of piety and morality, and none, except as containing the portions and foreshadowings of the truth. "By philosophy," he says, "I do not mean the Stoic, nor the Platonic, nor the Epicurean and Aristotelic, but all good doctrine in every one of the schools, all precepts of holiness combined with

[a] Rose's Neander. Eccl. Hist. p. 145. Tillem. Mem. vol. iv p. 240, 241.

[b] This was Origen's usual method, vide Euseb. Eccl. Hist. vi. 18. He has signified it himself in these words: γυμνάσιον μὲν φαμεν εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην σοφίαν, τέλος δὲ τὴν θείαν. Contr. Cels. vi 13.

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religious knowledge. All this, taken together, or the *Eclectic*, I call *philosophy:* whereas the rest are mere forgeries of the human intellect, and in no respect to be accounted divine."[a] At the same time, to mark out the peculiar divinity of the revealed religion, he traces all the philosophy of the heathen to the teaching of the Hebrew sages, earnestly maintaining its entire subserviency to Christianity, as but the love of that truth which the Scriptures really impart.

Apologies, &c.

The same general purpose of conciliating the heathen, and, (as far as might be,) indulging the existing fashions to which their literature was subjected, may be traced in the λόγοι which the Christians published in defence of their religion;[b] being what, in this day, might be called pamphlets, written in imitation of speeches after the manner of Isocrates, and adorned with those graces of composition, which the schools taught, and the inspired Apostle has exhibited in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Clement's Exhortation to the Gentiles, is a specimen of this style of writing; as also those of Athenagoras and Tatian, and that ascribed to Justin Martyr.

Justin.

Again;—the last-mentioned Father will afford us an instance of an economical relinquishment of a sacred doctrine. When Justin Martyr, in his argument with the Jew Trypho, (A. D. 150.) finds himself unable to convince him from the Old Testament of the divinity of Christ, he falls back upon the doctrine of His divine mission, as if this were a point indisputable on the one hand, and on the other, affording sufficient data for advancing, when expedient, to the proof of the full evangelical truth.[c] In the same passage, moreover, as arguing with an unbeliever, he permits himself to speak without an anathema of those, (the Ebionites,) who professed Christianity, and yet denied Christ's divinity. Athanasius himself fully recognizes the propriety of this concealment of the doctrine on a fitting occasion: and thus accounts for the silence of the Apostles as concerning it, in their speeches recorded in the Book of Acts, viz. that they were unwilling, by a disclosure of it, to prejudice the Jews against those miracles, the acknowledgment of which was a first step towards their receiving it.[d]

Gregory of Neocæsarea.

The history of Gregory of Neocæsarea, (A. D. 240—270.) furnishes us with a similar but stronger instance of an economical concealment of the full truth. It seems that certain heretical teachers, in the time of Basil, ascribed to him, whether by way of censure or in self-defence, the Sabellian view of the

[a] Clem. Strom i. 7

[b] Dodwell in Iren diss vi § 14 16.

[c] Vide Bull, Judic Eccl vi. 7.

[d] Athan de sent Dionys 8 Theodoret, Chrysostom, and others, say the same Vide Suicer Thesaurus, verb στοιχεῖον, and Whitby on Heb v 12

Trinity; and, moreover, the belief that Christ was a creature. The occasion of these alleged statements on Gregory's part, was a *viva voce* controversy with a heathen, which had been taken down in writing by the by-standers. The charge of Sabellianism is refuted by Gregory's extant writings; it is answered, however, together with the latter more plausible calumny, by St. Basil, in the following passage, which well illustrates the theory of controversy which I have above attempted to describe. "When Gregory," he says, "expressed himself as if the Father and Son differed only in our conception of them, he spoke *not as teaching doctrine, but as arguing with an unbeliever*, viz. in his disputation with Ælianus; but this distinction our heretical opponents could not enter into, much as they pride themselves on the subtilty of their intellect. Even granting there were no mistakes in taking the notes, (which. please God, it is my intention to prove from the text as it now stands,) it is to be supposed, that he did not think it necessary to be very exact in his doctrinal terms, when employed in converting a heathen; but in some things, even to concede to his feelings, that he might gain him over to the cardinal points. Accordingly, you may find many expressions there, of which heretics now take advantage, such as 'creature,' 'made,' and the like. So again, many statements which he has made concerning Christ's human nature, are referred to His divine nature, by those who do not skilfully enter into his meaning; as, indeed, is the very expression, just referred to, which they have circulated." [a]

Athanasius.

I will here again instance a parallel use of the economy on the part of Athanasius himself, and will make use of the words of the learned Petavius. "Even Athanasius," he says, "whose very gift it was, above all other Fathers, to possess a clear and accurate knowledge of the Catholic doctrine, so that all succeeding antagonists of Arianism may be truly said to have derived their powers and their arguments from him; even this keen and vigilant champion of orthodoxy, in arguing with the Gentiles for the divinity and incarnation of the Word, urges them with considerations drawn from their own philosophical notions concerning Him. Not that he was ignorant how unlike orthodoxy, and how like Arianism, such notions were, but he bore in mind the necessity of favourably disposing the minds of the Gentiles to listen to his teaching; and he was aware that it was one thing to lay the rudiments of the faith in an ignorant or heathen mind, and another to defend the faith against heretics, or to teach it dogmatically. E. g. in answering the objection of the Divine Word having taken flesh, which offended them, he bids them consider whether they are not in-

[a] Basil. Epist ccx § 5

consistent in dwelling upon this, while they believe themselves that there is a Divine Word, the presiding principle and soul of the world, through the movements of which He is visibly displayed; 'for what (he asks) does Christianity say more than that the Word has presented Himself to the inspection of our senses by the instrumentality of a body?' And yet it is certain that the Father and the pervading Word of the Platonists, differed materially from the sacred Persons of the Trinity, as we hold the doctrine, and Athanasius too, in every page of his writings." [a]

Canon for the use of the Economy.

These are instances in various ways of the economical method, i. e. of accommodation to the feelings and prejudices of the hearer, in leading him to the reception of a novel or unacceptable doctrine. It professes to be founded in the actual necessity of the case; i. e. because those who are strangers to the tone of thought and principles of the speaker, cannot at once be initiated into his system, and because they must begin with imperfect views; and therefore, if he is to teach them at all, he must put before them large propositions, which he has afterwards to modify, or make assertions which are but parallel or analogous to the truth, rather than coincident with it. And it cannot be denied, that those who attempt to speak at all times the naked truth, or rather (as it may be called,) the commonly-received expression of it, are certain, more than other men, to convey wrong impressions of their meaning to those who happen to be below them, or to differ widely from them, in intelligence and cast of mind. On the other hand, the abuse of the Economy in the hands of unscrupulous reasoners, is obvious. Even the honest controversialist or teacher will find it very difficult to represent without misrepresenting, what it is yet his duty to present to his hearers with caution or reserve. Here the obvious rule to guide our practice is, to be careful ever to maintain *substantial* truth in our use of the economical method. It is thus we lead forward children by degrees, influencing and impressing their minds by means of their own confined conceptions of things, before we attempt to introduce them to our own; yet at the same time modelling their thoughts according to the analogy of those to which we mean ultimately to bring them. Again, the information given to the blind man, that scarlet was like the sound of a trumpet, is an instance of an unexceptionable economy, since it was as true as it could be under the circumstances of the case, conveying a substantially correct impression as far as it went.

Application of it to the instances given.

In applying this rule to the instances above given, it is plain that Justin, Gregory, or Athanasius, were justifiable or not in their Economy, according as they did or did not practically

[a] Petav Theol. Dogm. tom. ii præf. 3, § 5.

mislead their opponents. Merely to leave a man in errors which he had independently of us, or to refuse to remove them, cannot be objected to as a fault, and may be a duty; though it is so difficult to hit the mark in these perplexing cases, that it is not wonderful, should these or other fathers have failed at times, and said more or less than was proper. Again, in the instances of S. Paul, Theonas, Origen, and Clement, the doctrine which their conduct implies, is the divinity of Paganism; a true doctrine, though the heathen whom they addressed at first would not rightly apprehend it. But I am aware, that some persons will differ from me here, and others will be perplexed about my meaning. So let this be a reserved point, to be considered presently, when we have finished the subject of the Economy.

Clement.

The Alexandrian father who has already been referred to, accurately describes the rules which should guide the Christian in speaking and acting economically. "Being ever persuaded of the omnipresence of God," he says, "and ashamed to come short of the truth, he is satisfied with the approval of God, and of his own conscience. Whatever is in his mind, is also on his tongue; towards those who are fit recipients, both in speaking and living, he harmonizes his profession with his opinions. He both thinks and speaks the truth; except when consideration is necessary, and then, as a physician for the good of his patients, he will be false, or utter a falsehood, as the Sophists, say. For instance, the great Apostle circumcised Timothy, while he cried out and wrote down, 'Circumcision availeth not;' and yet, lest he should so suddenly tear his Hebrew disciples from the Law, as to unsettle them, accommodating himself to the Jews, he became a Jew, that he might make his gain of all. . . Nothing, however, but his neighbour's good will lead him to do this. . . He gives himself up for the Church, for the friends whom he has begotten in the faith, for an ensample to those who have the ability to undertake the high office (οἰκονομίαν) of a teacher, full of love to God and man; and so, while he preserves the sincerity of his words, he at the same time displays the work of zeal for the Lord."[a]

Divine Economies.

Further light will be thrown upon the doctrine of the Economy, by considering it as exemplified in the dealings of Providence towards man. The word occurs in Scripture in Eph. i. 10. where it is used for the series of Divine appointments viewed as a whole, by which the Gospel is introduced and realised among mankind, being translated in our version *dispensation*. It will evidently bear a wider sense, embracing the Jewish and patriarchal dispensations, or any Divine procedure, greater or less, which consists of means and an end.

[a] Clem. Strom. vii. 8, 9

Thus it is applied by the Fathers to the history of Christ's humiliation, as exhibited in the doctrines of His incarnation, ministry, atonement, exaltation, and mediatorial sovereignty, and, as such, distinguished from the θεολογία or the collection of truths relative to His personal indwelling in the bosom of the Divine Essence. Again, it might with equal fitness be used for the general system of Providence by which the world's course is carried on; or, again, for the work of creation itself, as opposed to the absolute perfection of the eternal God, that internal concentration of His active attributes in self-contemplation, which took place on the seventh day, when He rested from all the work which He had made. And since this everlasting and unchangeable quiescence is the simplest and truest notion we can obtain of the Deity, it seems to follow, that strictly speaking, all those so-called Economies or dispensations, which display His character in action, are but condescensions, to the infirmity and peculiarity of our minds, shadowy representations of realities which are incomprehensible to creatures such as ourselves, who estimate every thing by the rule of association and arrangement, by the notion of a purpose and plan, object and means, parts and whole. What e. g. is the revelation of general moral laws, their infringement, their tedious victory, the endurance of the wicked, and the "winking at the times of ignorance," but an οἰκονομία of greater truths untold, the best practical communication of them which our minds in their present state will admit? What are the phenomena of the external world, but a divine mode of conveying to the mind the realities of existence, individuality, and the influence of being on being, the best possible, though beguiling the imaginations of most men with a harmless but unfounded belief in matter as distinct from the impressions on their senses? This at least is the opinion of some philosophers, and whether the particular theory be right or wrong, it serves as an illustration here of the great truth which we are considering. Or what, again, as others hold, is the popular argument from final causes but an οἰκονομία suited to the practical wants of the multitude, as teaching them in the simplest way the active presence of Him, Who after all dwells intelligibly, prior to argument, in their heart and conscience? And though on the mind's first mastering this general principle, it seems to itself at the moment to have cut all the ties which bind it to the universe, and to be floated off upon the ocean of interminable scepticism: yet a true sense of its own weakness brings it back, the instinctive persuasion that it must be intended to rely on something, and therefore that the information given, though philosophically inaccurate, must be practically certain; a sure confidence in the love of Him, Who cannot deceive, and Who has impressed the image and the thought of Himself and

of His will upon our original nature. Here then we may lay down with certainty as a consolatory truth, what was but a rule of duty when we were reviewing the Economies of man; viz. that whatever is told us from heaven, is true in so full and substantial a sense, that no possible mistake can arise practically from following it. And it may be added, on the other hand, that the greatest risk will result from attempting to be wiser than God has made us, and to outstep in the least degree the circle which is prescribed as the limit of our range. This is but the duty of implicit faith in Him Who knows what is good for us, and Who has ordained that in our practical concerns intellectual ability should do no more than enlighten us in the difficulties of our situation, not in the solutions of them. Accordingly, we may safely admit the 1st chapter of the book of Job, the 22d of 1 Kings, and other passages of Scripture, to be οἰκονομίαι, i. e. representations conveying substantial truth in the form in which we are best able to receive it; and to be accepted by us and used in their literal sense, as our highest wisdom, because we have no powers of mind equal to the more philosophical determination of them. Again, the Mosaic dispensation was an οἰκονομία, simulating (so to say) unchangeableness, when from the first it was destined to be abolished. And our Blessed Lord's conduct on earth abounds with the like gracious and considerate condescension to the weakness of His creatures, who would have been driven either to a terrified inaction or to presumption, had they known then as afterwards the secret of His divine nature.

Pretended instances.

I will add two or three instances, in which this doctrine of the Divine Economies has been wrongly applied; and I do so from necessity, lest the foregoing remarks should seem to countenance errors, which I am most desirous at all times and every where to protest against.

Supposed imperfect morality of the Old Testament.

For instance, the Economy has been employed to the disparagement of the Old Testament saints; as if the praise bestowed on them by Almighty God were but economically given, i. e. with reference to their times and circumstances; their real insight into moral truth being possibly below the average standard of knowledge in matters of faith and practice received among nations rescued from the rude and semi-savage state, in which they are considered to have lived. And again, it has been even supposed, that injunctions, as well as praise, have been thus given them, which an enlightened age is at liberty to criticise; e. g. the command to slay Isaac has sometimes been viewed as an Economy, based upon certain received ideas in Abraham's day, concerning the innocence and merit of human sacrifice. It is enough to have thus disclaimed participation in these theories, which of course are no objection to the general doctrine of the Economy, unless indeed it could be

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shown, that those who hold a principle are answerable for all the applications arbitrarily made of it by the licentious ingenuity of others.

Supposed accommodation of St. Paul to Jewish notion of atonement.

Again, the principle of the Economy has sometimes been applied to the interpretation of the New Testament. It has been said, e. g. that the Epistle to the Hebrews does not state the simple truth in the sense in which the Apostles themselves believed it, but merely as it would be palatable to the Jews. The advocates of this hypothesis have proceeded to maintain, that the doctrine of the Atonement is no part of the essential and permanent evangelical system. To a conscientious reasoner, however, it is evident, that the structure of the Epistle in question is so intimately connected with the reality of the expiatory scheme, that to suppose the latter imaginary, would be to impute to the writer, not an Economy (which always preserves substantial truth,) but a gross and audacious deceit.

Supposed gospel artifice of the free promises and threats for conversion.

A parallel theory to this has been put forward by men of piety among the Predestinarians, with a view of reconciling the inconsistency between their faith and practice. They have suggested, that the promises and threats of Scripture are founded on an Economy, which is needful to effect the conversion of the elect, but clears up and vanishes under the light of the true spiritual perception, to which the converted at length attain. This has been noticed in another connexion, and will here serve as one among many illustrations which might be given, of the fallacious application of a true principle. And so much upon the *οἰκονομία*.

The dispensation of Paganism.

4. A question was just now reserved, as interfering with the subject then before us. In what sense can it be said, that there is any connexion between Paganism and Christianity so real, as to warrant the preacher of the latter to conciliate idolaters by allusion to it? St. Paul evidently connects the true religion with the existing systems which he laboured to supplant, in Acts xvii. and his example is a sufficient guide to missionaries now, and a full justification of the line of conduct pursued by the Alexandrians, in the instances similar to it; but are we able to *account for* his conduct, and ascertain the principle by which it was regulated? I think we can; and the exhibition of it will set before the reader another doctrine of the Alexandrian school, which it is much to our purpose to understand, and which I shall call *the divinity of Traditionary Religion.*

Account and evidence of it in Scripture.

We know well enough for practical purposes what is meant by revealed religion; viz. that it is the doctrine taught in the Mosaic and Christian dispensations, and contained in the Holy Scriptures, and is from God in a sense in which no other doctrine can be said to be from Him. Yet, if we would speak correctly, we must confess, on the authority of the Bible itself, that *all* knowledge of religion is from Him, and not only that which

the Bible has transmitted to us. There never was a time when God had not spoken to man, and told him to a certain extent his duty. His injunctions to Noah, the common father of all mankind, is the first recorded fact of the sacred history after the deluge. Accordingly, we are expressly told in the New Testament, that at no time He left Himself without witness in the world, and that in every nation He accepts those who fear and obey Him. It would seem, then, that there is something true and divinely revealed, in every religion all over the earth, overloaded, as it may be, and at times even stifled by the impieties which the corrupt will and understanding of man have incorporated with it. Such are the doctrines of the power and presence of an invisible God, of His moral law and governance, of the obligation of duty, and the certainty of a just judgment, and of reward and punishment being dispensed in the end to individuals; so that revelation, properly speaking, is an universal, not a partial gift; and the distinction between the state of Israelites formerly and Christians now, and that of the heathen, is, not that we can, and they cannot attain to future blessedness, but that the Church of God ever has had, and the rest of mankind never have had, *authoritative documents* of truth, and *appointed channels* of communication with Him. The word and the Sacraments are the characteristic of the elect people of God, but all men have had more or less the guidance of tradition, in addition to those internal notices of right and wrong which the Spirit has put into the heart of each individual. This vague and unconnected family of religious truths, originally from God, but sojourning without the sanction of miracle, or a definite home, as pilgrims up and down the world, and discernible and separable from the corrupt legends with which they are mixed, by the spiritual mind alone, may be called the *dispensation of Paganism*, after the example of the learned father already appealed to.[a] And, further, Scripture gives us reason to believe that the traditions, thus originally delivered to mankind at large, have been secretly re-animated and enforced by new communications from the unseen world; though these were not of such a nature as to be produced as evidence, or used as criteria and tests, and roused the attention rather than informed the understandings of the heathen. The book of Genesis contains a record of the dispensation of natural religion, or paganism, as well as of the patriarchal. The dreams of Pharaoh and Abimelech, as of Nebuchadnezzar afterwards, are instances of the dealings of God with those to whom He did not vouchsafe a written revelation. Or should it be said, that the particular cases merely come within the

[a] Clement says, Τὴν φιλοσοφίαν Ἕλλησιν οἷα διαθήκην οἰκείαν δεδόσθαι, ὑποβάθραν οὖσαν τῆς κατὰ Χριστὸν φιλοσοφίας. Strom. vi. p. 648.

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range of the Divine supernatural governance which was in their neighbourhood,—an assertion which requires proof,—let the Book of Job be taken as a less suspicious instance of the dealings of God with the heathen. Job was a pagan in the same sense in which the Eastern nations are Pagans in the present day. He lived among idolaters,[a] yet he and his friends had cleared themselves from the superstitions with which the true creed was beset; and, while one of them was divinely instructed by dreams,[b] he himself at length heard the voice of God out of the whirlwind, in recompense for his long trial and his faithfulness under it.[c] Why should not the Book of Job be accepted by us, as a gracious intimation given us, who are God's sons, for our comfort, when we are anxious about our brethren who are still "scattered abroad" in an evil world; an intimation that the Sacrifice, which is the hope of Christians, has its power and its success, wherever men seek God with their whole heart?—If it be objected that Job lived in a less corrupted age than the times of ignorance which followed, Scripture, as if for our full satisfaction, draws back the curtain further still in the history of Balaam. There a bad man and a heathen is made the oracle of true divine messages about doing justly, and loving mercy, and walking humbly; nay, even among the altars of superstition, the Spirit of God vouchsafes to utter prophecy.[d] And so in the cave of Endor, even a saint was sent from the dead to join the company of an apostate king, and the sorceress whose aid he was seeking.[e] Accordingly, there is nothing unreasonable in the notion, that there may have been heathen poets and sages, or sibyls again, in a certain extent divinely illuminated, and organs through whom religious and moral truth was conveyed to their countrymen; though their knowledge of the Power from whom the gift came, nay, and their perception of the gift as existing in themselves, may have been very faint or defective.

Described by Clement.

This doctrine, thus imperfectly sketched, shall now be presented to the reader in the words of St. Clement. "To the Word of God," he says, "all the host of angels and heavenly powers is subject, revealing, as He does, His holy office for the glory of Him Who has put all things under Him. Wherefore, His are all men; some actually knowing Him, others not as yet; some as friends [Christians], others as faithful labourers, [Jews], others as bond-servants, [heathen]. He is the Teacher, who instructs the enlightened Christian in mysteries, and supports the faithful labourer in cheerful hopes, and schools the hard of heart with His keen corrective dis-

[a] Job xxxi. 26—28. [b] Ibid. iv. 13, &c.
[c] Ibid. xxxviii. 1; xlii. 10, &c.
[d] Numb. xxii.—xxiv. Mic. vi. 5—8.
[e] 1 Sam. xxviii. 14.

cipline; so that His providence is particular, public, and universal. . . He it is Who gives to the Greeks their philosophy by His ministering angels . . . for He is the Saviour not of these or those, but of all . . . . His revelations, both the former and the latter, are drawn forth from one fount; those who were before the Law, not suffered to be without law, those who do not hear the Jewish philosophy, not surrendered to an unbridled course. Dispensing in former times His word to some, to others philosophy, now at length, by His own personal coming, He has closed the course of unbelief, which is henceforth inexcusable; Greek and barbarian [Jew] being led forward by a separate process to that perfection which is through faith." [a]

Right mode of addressing the heathen

If this doctrine be scriptural, it is not difficult to determine the line of conduct which is to be observed by the Christian apologist and missionary. Believing God's hand to be in every system, so far forth as it is true, (though Scripture alone is the depositary of His unadulterated and complete revelation) he will, after St. Paul's manner, seek some points in the existing superstitions as the basis of his own instructions, instead of indiscriminately condemning and discarding the whole assemblage of heathen opinions and practices; and he will address his hearers, not as men in a state of actual perdition, but as being in imminent *danger* of "the wrath to come," because they are in bondage and ignorance, and probably (i. e. the vast majority of them are,) under God's displeasure in fact; but not necessarily so, from the very circumstance of their being heathen. And while he strenuously opposes all that is idolatrous, immoral, and profane, in their creed, he will profess to be leading them on to perfection, and recovering and purifying, rather than reversing the essential principles of their belief.

Infidelity worse than Paganism

A number of corollaries may be drawn from this view of the relation of Christianity to Paganism, by way of solving difficulties which often perplex the mind. E. g. we thus perceive the utter impropriety of ridicule and satire as a means of preparing a heathen population for the reception of the truth. Of course it is right, soberly and temperately, to expose the absurdities of idol worship; but sometimes it is maintained that a writer, such as the infamous Lucian, who scoffs at an established religion altogether, is the suitable preparation for the Christian preacher,—as if infidelity were a middle state between falsehood and truth. This view derives its plausibility from the circumstance that in drawing out systems in writing, to erase a false doctrine is the first step towards inserting the true. Accordingly, the mind is often compared

[a] Clem Strom vii 2

to a tablet or paper: a state of it is contemplated of absolute freedom from all prepossessions and tastes for one system or another as a first step towards arriving at the truth; and infidelity represented as that candid and dispassionate frame of mind, which is the desideratum. It has been a matter of surprise and grief to serious persons, to hear, for instance at the present day, men who profess high religious attainments exulting in the overthrow of religion in France, as if an unbeliever were in a more hopeful state than a bigot, for advancement in real spiritual knowledge. But in truth, the mind never can resemble a blank paper, in its freedom from impressions and prejudices. Infidelity is a positive, not a negative state; it is a state of profaneness, pride, and selfishness; and he who believes a little, but encompasses that little with the inventions of men, is undeniably in a better condition than he who blots out from his mind both the human inventions and the portion of truth which was concealed in them.

Apostacy worse than Paganism

Again: it is plain that the tenderness of dealing, which it is our duty to adopt towards a heathen unbeliever, is not to be used towards an apostate. No Economy can be employed towards those who have been once enlightened, and have fallen away. I wish to speak explicitly on this subject, because there is a great deal of that spurious charity among us which would cultivate the friendship of those who, in a Christian country, speak against the Church or its creeds. Origen and others were not unwilling to be on a footing of intercourse with the heathen philosophers of their day, in order, if it were possible, to lead them into the truth; but deliberate heretics and apostates, those who had known the truth, and rejected it, were objects of their abhorrence, and were avoided from the truest charity to them. For what can be said to those who already know all we have to say? and how can we show our fear for their souls, nay, and for our own stedfastness, except by a strong action? Thus Origen, when a youth, could not be induced to attend the prayers of an heretic of Antioch whom his patroness had adopted, βδελυττόμενος, from a loathing, as he says, of heresy. And St. Austin himself tells us, that while he was a Manichee, his own mother would not eat at the same table with him in her house, from her strong aversion to the blasphemies which were the characteristic of his sect.[a] And Scripture fully sanctions this mode of acting by the severity with which such unhappy men are spoken of, on the different occasions when mention is made of them.[b]

Right use of heathen converts to Christianity

Further: the foregoing remarks may serve to show us, with what view the early Church cultivated and employed heathen

[a] Euseb. Hist vi. 2. Bingham, Antiq. xvi. 2, § 11

[b] Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Thess. iii 14, 2 John, 10, 11, &c.

literature in its missionary labours; viz. not with the notion that the cultivation, which literature gives, was any substantial improvement of our moral nature, but as thus opening the mind, and rendering it capable of an appeal; nor, as if the heathen literature itself had any direct connexion with the matter of Christianity, but because it contained in it the scattered fragments of those original traditions which might be made the means of introducing a student to the Christian system, being the ore in which the true metal was found. The account above given of the conversion of Gregory is a proof of this.

Caution against Neologism.

Lastly, the only danger to which the Alexandrian doctrine is exposed, is that of its confusing the Scripture dispensations with that of natural religion, as if they were of equal authority; as if the Gospel had not a claim of acceptance on the conscience of all who heard it, nor became a touchstone of their moral condition; and as if the Bible, as the pagan system, were but partially true, and had not been attested by the discriminating evidence of miracles. This is the heresy of the Neologians in this day, as it was of the Eclectics in primitive times, as will be shown in the next section. The foregoing extract from Clement shows his entire freedom from so grievous an error; but in order to satisfy any suspicion which may remain of his using language which may have led to a more decided corruption after his day, I will quote a passage from the sixth book of his Stromata, in which he maintains the supremacy of revealed religion as the source and test of all other religions; the extreme imperfection of the latter, the derivation of whatever is true in these from revelation; the secret presence of God in them, by that Word of Life Which is directly and bodily revealed in Christianity; the corruption and yet forced imitation of the truth by the evil spirit in such of them, as he wishes to make pass current among mankind. "Should it be said that the Greeks discovered philosophy by human wisdom, I reply, that I find the Scriptures declare all wisdom to be a divine gift: e. g. the Psalmist considers wisdom to be the greatest of gifts, and offers this petition, 'I am Thy servant, make me wise.' And does not David ask for illumination in its diverse functions, when he says, 'let Thy teaching make me humane, instructed, and understanding, for I have believed Thy revelations?' Here he confesses that the covenants of God are of supreme authority, and vouchsafed to the choice part of mankind. Again, there is a Psalm which says of God, 'He hath not acted thus with any other nation, and His judgments He hath not revealed to them;' where the words, 'He hath not done *thus*,' imply that He hath indeed *acted*, but not *thus*. By using *thus* he contrasts their case with our superiority; else the prophet might simply have said, 'He hath not acted with other nations,' without adding *thus*. The pro-

phetical figure, 'The Lord is over many waters,' alludes to the same truth; i. e. a Lord not only of the different covenants, but also of the various methods of teaching, of such as lead to righteousness whether among the Gentiles or the Jews. David also bears his testimony to this truth, when he says in the Psalm, 'Let the sinners be turned into hell, all the nations which *forget* God;' i. e. they forget Whom they formerly remembered, they put aside Him Whom they knew before they forgot. It seems then there was some dim knowledge of God even among the Gentiles. . . . They who say that philosophy originates with the devil, would do well to consider what Scripture says about the devil's being transformed into an angel of light. For what will he do then? it is plain he will prophesy. Now if he prophesies as an angel of light, of course he will speak what is true. If he shall prophesy angelic and enlightened doctrine, he will prophesy what is profitable also; i. e. *at the time when* he is thus changed in his apparent actions, far different as he is at bottom in his real apostacy. For how would he deceive, except by craftily leading on the inquirer *by means of truth*, to an intimacy with himself, and so at length stealing him away to error? . . . . therefore philosophy is not false, though he who is thief and liar, speaks truth from a change in his outward acts . . . . . The philosophy of the Greeks, limited and particular as it is, contains the rudiments of that really perfect knowledge which is beyond this world, conversant in intellectual objects, and those still more spiritual, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, before they were made clear to us by our Great Teacher, Who reveals the holy of holies, and still holier truths in an ascending scale, to those who are genuine heirs of the Lord's adoption."[a]

Platonism.

5. What I have said about the method of teaching adopted by the Alexandrian, and more or less by the other primitive Churches, amounts to this; that they on principle refrained from telling unbelievers all they believed themselves, and further, that they endeavoured to connect their own creed with theirs, whether Jewish or pagan, adopting their sentiments, and even language, as far as they lawfully could. Some instances of this have been given; more will follow, in the remarks which I shall now make, upon the influence of Platonism on their theological language. The reasons, which induced the early Fathers to avail themselves of the language of Platonism, were various. They did so, partly as an *argumentum ad hominem;* as if the Christian were not professing in the doctrine of the Trinity a more mysterious tenet, than that which had been propounded by a great heathen authority; partly to conciliate their philosophical opponents; partly to

[a] Strom vi. 8.

save themselves the arduousness of inventing terms, where the Church had not yet authoritatively supplied them; and partly with the hope, or even belief, that the Platonic school had been guided in portions of its system by a more than human wisdom, of which Moses was the unknown but real source. As far as these reasons depend upon the rule of the Economy, they have already been considered; and an instance of their operation, given in the exoteric conduct of Athanasius himself, whose orthodoxy no one questions. But the last reason given, their suspicion of the divine origin of the Platonic doctrine, requires some explanation.

Pagan tradition of a Trinity.

It is unquestionable that, from very early times, traditions have been afloat through the world, attaching the notion of a Trinity, in some sense or other, to the first Cause. Not to mention the traces of this doctrine in the classical and the Indian mythologies, we detect it in the Magian hypothesis of a supreme and two subordinate antagonist deities, in Plutarch's Trinity of God, matter, and the evil spirit, and in certain heresies in the early Church, which, to the Divine Being and the Demiurgus, added a third original principle, sometimes the evil spirit, and sometimes matter.[a] Plato has adopted the same general notion; and with no closer or more definite approach to the true doctrine. On the whole, it seems reasonable to infer, that the heathen world possessed traditions too ancient to be rejected, and too sacred to be used in popular theology. If Plato's doctrine bears a greater apparent resemblance to the revealed truth, than that of others, this is owing merely to his reserve in speaking on the subject. His obscurity allows room for an ingenious fancy to impose a meaning upon him. Whether he includes in his Trinity the notion of a First Cause, its active energy, and the influence resulting from it; or again, the divine substance as the source of all spiritual beings from eternity, the divine power and wisdom as exerted in time in the formation of the material world, and thirdly, the innumerable derivative spirits by whom the world is immediately governed, is altogether doubtful. Nay, even the revivers of his philosophy, who, in the third and fourth centuries after Christ, embellished the doctrine with additions from Scripture, discover a like extraordinary variation in their mode of expounding it. The Maker of the world [δημιουργὸς] considered by Plato sometimes the first, sometimes the second principle, is by Julian placed as the second, by Plotinus as the third, and by Proclus as the fourth, i. e. the last of three subordinate powers, all dependent on a first, or the One

[a] Cudworth, Intell. Syst. i. 4, § 13. 16. Beausobre Hist de Manich. iv. 6, § 8, &c.

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Supreme Deity.[a] In truth, speculations, vague and unpractical as these, made no impression on the minds of the heathen philosophers, and perhaps were never received by them as matters of fact, but as allegories and metaphysical notions, and accordingly, caused in them no solicitude or diligence to maintain consistency in their expression of them.

Its reception among the Jews.

But very different was the influence of the ancient theory of Plato, however originated, when it came in contact with believers in the inspired records; who at once discerned in it that mysterious doctrine, brought out as if into bodily shape and almost practical persuasiveness, which lay hid under the angelic manifestations of the Law and the visions of the Prophets. Difficult, as it is, to determine the place in the divine word where the doctrine of the Logos is first revealed, and how far it is intended in each particular passage, it is doubtless seated very deeply in the structure of Scripture. Appearing first as if a mere created minister of God's will, He is found to be invested with an ever-brightening glory, till at length we are bid fall down as before the personal Presence and consubstantial Representative of the one God. Possessing then in the sacred volume a key, more or less exact according to their degree of knowledge, for that aboriginal tradition which the heathen ignorantly but piously venerated, the ancient believers were prompt in appropriating the language of philosophers, with a changed meaning, to the rightful service of that spiritual kingdom, of which a divine personal mediation was the great characteristic. In the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, and much more, in the writings of Philo, the λόγος of Plato, which had denoted the divine energy in forming the world. [δημιουργὸς] or the previous all-perfect incommunicable design of it, (hence called μονογενής) was arrayed in the attributes of personality, made the instrument of creation, and the revealed image of the incomprehensible God. Amid such bold and impatient anticipations of the future, it is not wonderful that the Alexandrian Jews outstepped the truth which they hoped to forestal: and, that intruding into things not seen as yet, with the confidence of prophets rather than of disciples of revelation, they eventually obscured the doctrine when disclosed, which we may well believe they loved in prospect and desired to honour.—This remark particularly applies to Philo, who associating it with Platonic notions as well as words, developed its lineaments with so rude and hasty a hand, as to separate the idea of the Λόγος from that of the eternal God; and so perhaps to prepare the way for Arianism.[b]

[a] Petav Theol. Dogm. tom. ii. i 1, § 5.

[b] This may be illustrated by the theological language of the Paradise Lost, which is unexceptionable as far as the very words go, conformable both to

Among the Christians.

Even after this Alexandrino-Judaic doctrine had been corrected and completed by the inspired Apostles St. Paul and St. John, it did not lose its hold upon the Fathers of the Christian Church, who could not but discern in the old Scriptures, even more clearly than their predecessors, those rudiments of the perfect truth which God's former revelations concealed; and called others, (as it were,) to gaze upon these both as a prophetical witness in confutation of unbelief, and in gratitude to Him Who had wrought so marvellously with His Church. But it followed from the nature of the case, that, while they thus traced with watchful eyes, under the veil of the literal text, the first and gathering tokens of that Divine agent Who in fulness of time became their Redeemer, they were led to speak of Him in terms short of that full confession of His divine greatness, which the Gospel reveals, and which they themselves elsewhere unequivocally expressed; especially, as living in times before the history of heresy had taught them the necessity of caution in their phraseology. Thus, e. g. from a text in the book of Proverbs, (viii. 22.) which they understood to refer to Christ, Origen and others speak of Him as "created by the Lord [Κύριος ἔκτισεν Septuag.] in the beginning, before His works of old:" meaning no more than that it was He, the true Light of man, Who was secretly intended by the Spirit, and mystically (though incompletely) described, when Solomon spoke of the Divine Wisdom as the instrument of God's providence and moral governance. In like manner. when Justin speaks of the Son as the *minister of God*, it is with direct reference to those numerous passages of the Old Testament, in which a ministering angelic presence is more or less characterized by the titles and attributes of Divine perfection.[a] And, in the use of this emblematical diction they were countenanced, (not to mention the Apocalypse,) by the almost sacred authority of the Platonizing books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus; works so highly revered by the Alexandrian Church, as to be put into the hands of Catechumens as a preparation for inspired Scripture, contrary to the discipline observed in the neighbouring Church of Jerusalem.[b]

Instances of Platonic language in the Fathers.

The following are additional instances of Platonic language in the early Fathers; though the reader will scarcely perceive at first sight what is the fault in them, unless he happens to know the defective or perverse sense in which philosophy

Scripture and the writings of the Fathers, but becomes offensive as being dwelt upon as if it were literal, not figurative. It is scriptural to say that the Son went forth from the Father to create the worlds; but when this is made the basis of a scene or pageant, it borders on Arianism. Milton has made allegory, or the Economy, *real*. Vide infra. ch. ii § 4, fin

[a] Justin. Apol. i 63. Tryph 56 &c

[b] Bingham Antiq x. 1. § 7.

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or heresy used them.[a] E. g. Justin speaks of the Word as "fulfilling the Father's will." Clement calls Him, the ἐννόημα of God; and in another place, the Second Principle of all things, the Father Himself being the First. Elsewhere he speaks of the Son as an "all perfect, all holy, all sovereign, all authoritative, supreme, and all searching nature, *reaching close upon the sole Almighty*." In like manner Origen speaks of the Son as being "the *immediate* Creator, and, as it were, Artificer of the world;" and the Father, "the *Origin* of it, as *having committed to His Son*, the creation of the world." A bolder theology than this of Origen and Clement, is adopted by five early writers connected with very various schools of Christian teaching; none of whom, however, are of especial authority in the Church.[b] They explained the Scripture doctrine of the generation of the Word to mean, His manifestation at the beginning of the world as distinct from God: a statement, which, by weakening the force of an expression which is an evidence of our Lord's Divine nature, might perhaps lend some accidental countenance after their day, to the Arian denial of it.

General conclusions from the above.

I have now, perhaps, sufficiently accounted for the apparent liberality of the Alexandrian school; which, notwithstanding, was strict and uncompromising, when its system is fairly viewed as a whole, and with reference to its objects, and as distinct from that rival and imitative philosophy, to be mentioned in the next section, which rose from it at the beginning of the third century, and with which it is by some writers improperly confounded. That its principles were always accurately laid, or the conduct of its masters nicely adjusted to them, need not be contended; or that they opposed themselves with an exact impartiality to every form of error which assailed the Church; or that they duly entered into and soundly applied the Jewish Scriptures; or that in conducting the Economy they were altogether free from an ambitious imitation of the Apostles, nobly conceived indeed, but little becoming uninspired teachers. It may unreluctantly be confessed, wherever it can be proved, that their exoteric professions at times affected the purity of their esoteric doctrine, though this remark scarcely applies to their statements on the subject of the Trinity; and that they indulged a boldness of inquiry, such as innocence prompts, rashness and irreverence corrupt, and experience of its mischievous consequences is alone able to repress. Still all this,

[a] Petav. Theol. Dogm. tom. ii. 1. 3, 4.

[b] Theophilus of Antioch, (A.D. 168.) Tatian, pupil of Justin Martyr, (A.D. 169) Athenagoras of Alexandria, (A.D. 177.) Hippolytus the disciple of Irenæus and friend of Origen, (A.D. 220.) and the author who goes under the name of Novatian (A.D. 250.)

and much more than this, were it to be found, weighs as nothing against the mass of testimonies produceable from extant documents in favour of the severe orthodoxy of their creed. Against a multitude of the very strongest and most explicit declarations of the divinity of Christ, some of which will be cited in their proper place, but a very few apparent exceptions to the strictest language of technical theology can be gathered from their writings, and these are sufficiently explained by the above considerations. And further, such is the high religious temper which their works exhibit, as to be sufficient of itself to convince the Christian inquirer, that they would have shrunk from the deliberate blasphemy with which Arius in the succeeding century assailed and scoffed at the awful majesty of his Redeemer.

Origen.

—Origen, in particular, that man of strong heart, (χαλκέντερος) who has paid for the unbridled freedom of his speculations on other subjects of theology, by the multitude of grievous and unfair charges which burden his name with posterity, protests, by the forcible argument of a life devoted to God's service, against his alleged connexion with the cold disputatious spirit, and the unprincipled domineering ambition, which are the historical badges of the heretical party. Nay it is a remarkable fact, that it was he who discerned the heresy[a] outside the Church on its first rise, and actually gave the alarm, sixty years before Arius's day. Here let it suffice to set down in his vindication the following facts, which may be left to the consideration of the reader;—first, that his habitual hatred of heresy and concern for heretics were such, as to lead him, even when left an orphan in a stranger's house, to withdraw from the praying and teaching of one of them, celebrated for his eloquence, who was in favour with his patroness and other Christians of Alexandria; that all through his long life he was known throughout Christendom as the especial opponent of false doctrine, in its various shapes; and that his pupils, Gregory, Athenodorus, and Dionysius, were principal actors in the arraignment of Paulus, the historical forerunner of Arius;—next, that his speculations, extravagant as they often were, related to points not yet determined by the Church, and, consequently were really, what he frequently professed them to be, *inquiries;*—further, that these speculations were for

[a] "The Word," says Origen, "being the *Image* of the Invisible God, must Himself be invisible. Nay, I will maintain further, that, as being the *Image*, He is eternal, as the God Whose Image He is. For when was that God, Whom St. John calls the Light, destitute of the *Radiance* of His incommunicable glory, so that a man may dare to ascribe a beginning of existence to the Son . . . Let a man, who dares to say that the Son is not from eternity, consider well, that this is all one with saying, Divine *Wisdom* had a beginning, or *Reason*, or *Life*." Athan. de decr. Nic. § 27. Vid. also his περὶ ἀρχῶν, (if Ruffinus may be trusted,) for his denouncement of the still more characteristic Arianism of the ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων.

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the most part ventured in matters of inferior importance, certainly not upon the sacred doctrines which Arius afterwards impugned, and in regard to which even his enemy Jerome allows him to be orthodox;—that the opinions which brought him into disrepute in his life-time concerned the creation of the world, the nature of the human soul, and the like;—that his opinions or rather doubts, on these subjects, were imprudently made public by his friends;—that his writings were incorrectly transcribed even in his life-time, according to his own testimony;—that after his death, Arian interpolations appear to have been made in some of his works now lost, upon which the subsequent Catholic testimony of his heterodoxy is grounded;—that, on the other hand, in his extant works, the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly avowed, and in particular, our Lord's divinity energetically and variously enforced;—and lastly, that in matter of fact, the Arian party does not seem to have claimed him, or appealed to him in self-defence, till 30 years after the first rise of the heresy, when the originators of it were already dead, although they had showed their inclination to shelter themselves behind celebrated names, by the stress they laid on their connexion with the martyr Lucian.[a] But if so much can be adduced in exculpation of Origen from any grave charge of heterodoxy, what accusation can be successfully maintained against his less suspected fellow-labourers in the polemical school? so that, in concluding this part of the subject, we may with full satisfaction adopt the judgment of Jerome. "Fieri potest, ut vel simpliciter erraverint, vel alio sensu scripserint, vel à librariis imperitis eorum paullatim scripta corrupta sint. Vel certè, antequàm in Alexandrià, quasi dæmonium meridianum, Arius nasceretur, innocenter quædam et minùs cautè locuti sunt, et quæ non possint perversorum hominum calumniam declinare.[b]"

[a] Huet. Origen. lib. i lib. ii. 4 § 1 Bull Defens. F. N. ii. 9. Waterland's Works, vol iii. p. 322. Baltus Defense des Ss. Peres, ii. 20. Tillemont Mem. vol. iii. p. 259. Socrat. Hist. iv 26. Athanasius notices the change in the Arian polemics, from mere disputation to an appeal to authority, in his de Sent Dionys § 1. written about A D. 354. οὐδὲν οὔτ' εὔλογον οὔτε πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν ἐκ τῆς θείας γραφῆς ῥητὸν ἐχούσης τῆς αἱρέσεως αὐτῶν, ἀεὶ μὲν προφάσεις ἀναισχύντους ἐπορίζοντο καὶ σοφίσματα πιθανά· νῦν δὲ καὶ διαβάλλειν τοὺς πατέρας τετολμήκασι.

[b] Apolog. adv. Ruffin. ii Oper vol. ii. p. 119.

SECTION IV.

THE ECLECTIC SECT.

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Supposed connexion of Platonism with Arianism.

THE words of St. Jerome, with which the last section closed, may perhaps suggest the suspicion, that the Alexandrians, though orthodox themselves, yet incautiously prepared the way for Arianism by the countenance they gave to the use of the Platonic theological language. But, before speculating on the medium of connexion between Platonism and Arianism, it would be well to ascertain the existence of the connexion itself, which is very doubtful, whether we look for it in history, or in the respective characters of the parties professing the two doctrines; though it is certain that Platonism, and Origenism also, became the *excuse* and *refuge* of the heresy when it was condemned by the Church. I proceed to give an account of the rise and genius of Eclecticism, with the view of throwing light upon this question, i. e. of showing the relation of the philosophy both to the Alexandrian Church and to Arianism.

The Eclectic principle.

The Eclectic philosophy is so called from its professing to select the better parts of the systems invented before it, and to digest these into one consistent doctrine. It is doubtful when the principle of it originated, but it is probably to be ascribed to the Alexandrian Jews. Certain it is, that the true faith never could come into contact with the heathen philosophies, without exercising its right to arbitrate between them, to protest against their vicious or erroneous dogmas, and to extend its countenance to whatever bore an exalted or a practical character. A cultivated taste would be likely to produce among the heathen the same critical spirit which was created by real religious knowledge; and accordingly we find in the philosophers of the Augustan and the succeeding age, an approximation to an eclectic or syncretistic system, similar to that which is found in the writings of Philo. Some authors have even supposed, that Potamo, the original projector of the school based on this principle, flourished in the reign of Augustus; but this notion is untenable, and we must refer him to the age of Severus, at the end of the second century.[a] In the mean time, the Christians had continued to make use of the discriminative view of heathen philosophy which the Philonists had opened; and, as we have already seen, Clement, yet without allusion to particular sect or theory, which did not exist till after his day, declares himself the patron of the Eclectic principle. Thus we are introduced to the history of the school which embodied it.

[a] Brucker. Hist. Phil. per ii. part i. 2 § 4

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Rise of the Eclectic Sect.

Ammonius, the contemporary of Potamo, and virtually the founder of the Eclectic sect, was born of Christian parents, and educated as a Christian in the catechetical institutions of Alexandria, under the superintendence of Clement or Pantænus. After a time, he renounced, at least secretly, his belief in Christianity; and opening a school of morals and theology on the stock of principles, esoteric and exoteric, which he had learned in the Church, he became the founder of a system really his own, but which by a dexterous artifice he attributed to Plato. The philosophy thus introduced into the world, was at once patronised by the imperial court, both at Rome and in the East, and spread itself in the course of years throughout the empire, with bitter hostility and serious detriment to the interests of true religion; till at length, obtaining in the person of Julian, a second apostate for its master, it became the authorised interpretation and apology for the state polytheism. It is a controverted point whether or not Ammonius actually separated from the Church. His disciples affirm it; Eusebius, though not without some immaterial confusion of statement, denies it.[a] On the whole, it is probable that he began his teaching as a Christian, and but gradually disclosed the systematic infidelity on which it was grounded. We are told expressly, that he bound his disciples to secrecy, which was not broken, till they in turn became lecturers in Rome, and were led one by one to divulge the real doctrines of their master;[b] nor can we otherwise account for the fact of Origen having attended him for a time, since he who refused to hear Paulus of Antioch, when dependent on the patroness of that heretic, would scarcely have extended a voluntary countenance to a professed deserter from the Christian faith and name.

Its Neologism.

This conclusion is confirmed by a consideration of the nature of the error substituted by Ammonius for the orthodox belief; which was in substance what in these times would be called *Neologism*, a heresy which, even more than others, has shown itself desirous and able to conceal itself under the garb of sound religion, and to keep the form, while it destroys the spirit, of Christianity. So close, indeed, was the outward resemblance between Eclecticism and the divine system of which it was the deadly enemy, that St. Austin remarks, in more than one passage, that the difference between the two professions lay but in the varied acceptation of a few words and propositions.[c] This peculiar character of the Eclectic philosophy must be carefully noticed, for it exculpates the Catholic Fathers from being really implicated in proceedings,

[a] Euseb Hist Eccl. vi. 19. [b] Brucker, ibid.
[c] Mosheim diss. de turb. per recent. Plat. Eccl. § 12.

of which at first they did not discern the drift; while it explains that apparent connexion which, at the distance of centuries, exists between them and the real originator of it.

Essential mark of Neologism.

The essential mark of Neologism is the denial of the exclusive Divine mission and peculiar inspiration of the Scripture prophets; accompanied the while with a profession of general respect for them as benefactors of mankind, really instruments in God's hand, and in some sense the organs of His revelations; nay, in a fuller measure such, than other religious and moral teachers. In its most specious form, it admits whatever is good and true in the various religions in the world, to have actually come from God; in its most degraded, it accounts them all equally to be the result of mere human benevolence and skill. In all its shapes, it differs from the orthodox belief, primarily, in denying the miracles of Scripture to have taken place, in the peculiar way therein represented, as distinctive marks of God's presence accrediting the teaching of those who wrought them; next, as a consequence, in denying this teaching, as preserved in Scripture, to be in such sense the sole record of religious truth, that all who hear it are bound to profess themselves disciples of it. Its apparent connnexion with Christianity lies, (as St. Austin remarks) in the ambiguous use of certain terms, such as *divine*, *revelation*, *inspiration*, and the like; which may with equal ease be made to refer to ordinary and merely providential, or to miraculous appointments, in the counsels of Almighty Wisdom. And these words would be even more ambiguous than at the present day, in an age, when Christians were ready to grant, that the heathen were in some sense under a supernatural dispensation, as was explained in the last section.

Comparison of ancient with modern Neologism.

The rationalism of the Eclectics, though equally opposed with the modern to the doctrine of the peculiar divinity of the Scripture revelations, was circumstantially different from it. The Neologists of the present day deny that the miracles took place in the manner related in the sacred record; the Eclectics denied their cogency as an evidence of the extraordinary presence of God. Instead of viewing them as events of very rare occurrence, and permitted for important objects in the course of God's providence, they considered them to be common to every age and country, beyond the knowledge rather than the power of ordinary men, attainable by submitting to the discipline of certain mysterious rules, and the immediate work of beings far inferior to the supreme Governor of the world. It followed, that a display of miraculous agency having no connexion with the truth of the religious system which it accompanied, at least not more than any gift merely human, such as learning or talent, the inquirer was at once thrown upon the examination of the doctrines of Christianity, for the evidence of its divinity: and there being no place left for a claim on his

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allegiance to it as a whole, and for what is strictly termed faith, he admitted or rejected, as he chose, compared and mixed it with whatever was valuable elsewhere, and was at liberty to propose to himself that philosopher for a presiding authority, whom the Christians but condescended to praise for his approximation towards some of those truths which revelation had unfolded. The chapel of Alexander Severus was a fit emblem of that system, which placed on a level Abraham, Orpheus, Pythagoras, and the Sacred Name by which Christians are called. The zeal, the brotherly love, the beneficence, and the wise discipline of the Church, are applauded and held up for imitation in the letters of the Emperor Julian; who at another time calls the Almighty Guardian of the Israelites a "great God,"[a] while in common with his sect he professed to restore the Christian doctrine of the Trinity to its ancient and pure Platonic basis. It followed as a natural consequence, that the claims of religion being no longer combined, defined, and embodied in a personal Mediator between God and man, its various precepts were dissipated back again and confused in the mass of human knowledge, as before Christ came; and in its stead a mere intellectual literature arose in the Eclectic school, and usurped the theological chair as an interpreter of sacred duties, and the instructor of the inquiring mind. "In the religion which he (Julian) had adopted," says Gibbon, "piety and learning were almost synonymous; and a crowd of poets, of rhetoricians, and of philosophers, hastened to the Imperial Court, to occupy the vacant places of the bishops, who had seduced the credulity of Constantius."[b] Who does not recognise in this old philosophy the chief features of that recent school of liberalism and false illumination, political and moral, which is now Satan's instrument in deluding the nations? but which is worse and more earthly than it, inasmuch as his former artifice, affecting a religious ceremonial, could not but leave so much of substantial truth mixed in the system, as to impress its disciples with somewhat of a lofty and serious character, utterly foreign to the cold scoffing spirit of modern rationalism.

The Eclectics not countenanced by the Alexandrian masters.

The freedom of the Alexandrian masters from the Eclectic error was shown above, when I was explaining the principles of their teaching; a passage of Clement being cited, which clearly distinguished between the ordinary and the miraculous appointments of Providence. An examination of the dates of the history will show that they could not do more than bear this indirect testimony against it by anticipation. Clement himself was prior to the rise of Eclecticism; Origen prior to its public establishment as a sect. Ammonius opened his

[a] Gibbon, Hist ch. xxiii [b] Ibid

school at the end of the second century, and continued to preside in it at least till A. D. 242;[a] during which period, and probably for some years after his death, the real character of his doctrines was carefully hidden from the world. He committed nothing to writing, whether of his exoteric or esoteric philosophy; and when Origen, who was scarcely his junior, attended him about A. D. 200, probably had not yet decidedly settled the form of his system. Plotinus, the first promulgator and chief luminary of Eclecticism, began his public lectures A. D. 244; and for some time held himself bound by the promise of secrecy made to his master. Moreover, he selected Rome as the seat of his labours, and there is even proof that Origen and he never met. In Alexandria, on the contrary, the infant philosophy languished; no teacher of note succeeded to Ammonius; and even had it been otherwise, Origen had left the city for ever, ten years previous to that philosopher's death. It is clear, then, that he had no means of detecting the secret infidelity of the Eclectics; and the proof of this is still stronger, if, as Brucker calculates,[b] Plotinus did not divulge his master's secret till A. D. 255, since Origen died A. D. 253. Yet, even in this ignorance of the views of the Eclectics, we find the latter in his letter to Gregory expressing dissatisfaction at the actual effects which had resulted to the Church from that literature in which he himself was so eminently accomplished. "For my part," he says to Gregory, "taught by experience, I will own to you, that rare is the man, who, having accepted the precious things of Egypt, leaves the country, and uses them in decorating the worship of God. Most men, who descend thither, are brothers of Hadad (Jeroboam,) inventing heretical theories with heathen dexterity, and establishing, (so to say,) calves of gold in Bethel, the house of God."[c] So much concerning Origen's ignorance of the Eclectic philosophy. As to his pupils, Gregory and Dionysius, the latter, who was Bishop of Alexandria, died A. D. 264; Gregory on the other hand, pronounced his panegyrical oration upon Origen, in which his own attachment to heathen literature is avowed, as early as A. D. 239; and besides, he had no connexion whatever with Alexandria, but met with Origen at Cæsarea.[d] Moreover, just at this time there were heresies actually spreading in the Church of an opposite theological character, such as Paulianism; which withdrew their attention from the prospect or actual rise of a Platonic pseudo-theology; as will hereafter be shown.

[a] Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. Harles iv. 29.
[b] Brucker. ibid.
[c] Orig. Ep. ad Gregor. § 2.
[d] Tillemont, vol. iv Chronolog.

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How connected with them.

Such were the origin and principles of the Eclectic sect. It was an excrescence of the school of Alexandria, but not attributable to it in any other way, than other heresies might be ascribed to the Churches which give them birth, indeed, but cast them out and condemn them when they become manifest. It went out from the Christians, but it was not of them:—whether it resembled the Arians, on the other hand, and what use its tenets were to them, are the next points to consider.

Eclectics contrasted with the Arians. Disputation.

The Arian school has already been attributed to Antioch, as its birth-place, and its character determined to be what we may call Aristotelico-Judaic. Now, at very first sight, there are striking points of difference between it and the Eclectics. On its Aristotelic side, its disputatious temper was altogether uncongenial to the new Platonists. These were commonly distinguished by their melancholy temperament, which disposed them to mysticism, and often urged them to eccentricities bordering on insanity.[a] Far from cultivating the talents requisite for success in life, they placed the sublimer virtues in an abstraction from sense, and an indifference to ordinary duties. They believed that an intercourse with the intelligences of the spiritual world could only be effected by divesting themselves of their humanity; and that the acquisition of miraculous gifts would compensate for their neglect of rules necessary for the well-being of common mortals. In pursuit of this hidden talent, Plotinus meditated a journey into India, after the pattern of Apollonius; while bodily privations and magical rites were methods prescribed in their philosophy for rising in the scale of being. As might be expected from the professors of such a creed, the science of argumentation was disdained as useless in the case of those who were walking by an internal vision of the truth, not by the calculations of a tedious and progressive reason; and was only employed in condescending regard for such as were unable to rise to their own level. When Iamblichus was foiled in argument by a dialectitian, he observed that the syllogisms of his sect were not weapons which could be set before the many, being the energy of those inward virtues which are the peculiar ornament of the philosopher. Notions such as these, which have their measure of truth, if we substitute for the unreal and almost passive illumination of the mystics, that instinctive moral perception which the practice of virtue ensures, found no sympathy in the shrewd secular policy and the intriguing spirit of the Arians; nor again, in their sharp-witted unimaginative cleverness, their precise and technical disputations, their verbal distinctions, and their eager appeals to the judgment of the populace, which is ever destitute of refinement and delicacy, and has just

[a] Brucker, supra.

enough acuteness of apprehension to be susceptible of sophistical reasonings.

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Judaism.

On the other hand, viewing the school of Antioch on its Judaical side, we are met by a different but not less remarkable contrast to the Eclectics. These philosophers had followed the Alexandrians in adopting the allegorical rule; both from its evident suitableness to their mystical turn of mind, and as a means of obliterating the scandals, and reconciling the inconsistencies of the heathen mythology. Judaism, on the contrary, being carnal in its views, was essentially literal in its interpretations; and, in consequence, as hostile from its grossness, as the Sophists from their dryness, to the fanciful fastidiousness of the Eclectics. It had rejected the Messiah, because He did not fulfil its hopes of a temporal conqueror and king. It had clung to its obsolete ritual, as not discerning in it the anticipation of better promises and commands, then fulfilled in the Gospel. In the Christian Church, it was perpetuating the obstinacy of its unbelief in a disparagement of Christ's spiritual authority, a reliance on the externals of religious worship, and an indulgence in worldly and sensual pleasures. Moreover, it had adopted in its most odious form the doctrine of the Chiliasts or Millenarians, respecting the reign of the saints upon earth; Origen, and afterwards his pupil Dionysius, opposing it on the basis of an allegorical interpretation of Scripture.[a] And in this controversy, Judaism was still in connexion, more or less, with the School of Antioch: which is celebrated in those times, in contrast to the Alexandrian, for its adherence to the theory of the literal sense.[b]

Difference in their respective doctrines.

In may be added, as drawing an additional distinction beween the Arians and the Eclectics, that while the latter maintained the doctrine of Emanations, and of the eternity of matter, the hypothesis of the former required or implied the rejection of both tenets; so that the philosophy did not even furnish the argumentative foundation of the heresy, to which its theology outwardly bore a partial resemblance.

Points of agreement between them.

But in seasons of difficulty men look about on all sides for support; and Eclecticism, which had no attractions for the Sophists of Antioch while their speculations were unknown to the world at large, became a seasonable refuge, (as we learn from various authors,[c]) in the hands of ingenious disputants, when pressed by the numbers and authority of the defenders of orthodoxy. First, there was an agreement between the Schools of Ammonius and of Paulus, in the cardinal point of an invete-

[a] Mosh. de rebus ante Const. sæc. iii. c. 38.

[b] Conybeare Bamp. Lect. iv. Præfat. in Orig. Benedict vol. ii.

[c] Vid. Brucker, Hist. Phil. per ii part ii. i. 2. § 8. Baltus Defense des Peres ii. 19

rate opposition to the Catholic doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. The Judaizers admitted at most, only His miraculous conception. The Eclectics, honouring Him as a teacher of wisdom, still, far from considering Him more than man, were active in preparing specimens from the heathen sages of equal holiness and power. Next, the two parties agreed in rejecting from their theology all *mystery*, in the ecclesiastical notion of the word. The Trinitarian hypothesis of the Eclectics, was not perplexed by any part of that difficulty of statement, which, in the true doctrine, results from the very incomprehensibility of the subject of it. They declared their belief in a sublime tenet, which Plato had first propounded and the Christians corrupted; but their three Divine Principles, ἀρχικαὶ ὑποστάσεις were in no sense one, and, while essentially distinct from each other, there was a successive subordination of nature in the second and the third.[a] In such speculations the judaizing Sophist found the very desideratum which he in vain demanded of the Church; a scripturally-worded creed, without its accompanying difficulty of conception. Accordingly, he might appeal to the doctrine thus put into his hands by way of contrast as fulfilling his just demands; nay, in proportion as he out-argued and unsettled the faith of his Catholic opponent, so did he open a way, as a matter of necessity and without formal effort, for the perverted creed of that philosophy which had so mischievously anticipated the labours, and usurped the office of an ecclesiastical Synod. But, further, it must be observed, that, when the Sophist had mastered the Eclectic theology, he had in fact a most powerful weapon to mislead or to embarrass his Catholic antagonist. The doctrine, which Ammonius professed to discover in the Church and to reclaim from the Christians, was employed by the Arian as the testimony of the early Fathers to the truth of the heretical view which he was maintaining. What was but incaution, or rather unavoidable liberty, in the Ante-Nicene theology, was made the ground of his defence. Clement and Origen, already interpreted by a malignant rule, were witnesses provided by the Eclectics by anticipation against orthodoxy. This express appeal to the Alexandrian writers, seems, in matter of fact, to have been reserved for a late period of the controversy; but from the first an advantage would accrue to the Arians by their agreement, (as far as it went,) with received language in the early Church. Perplexity and doubt were thus necessarily introduced into the minds of those who only heard the rumour of the discussion, and even of many who witnessed it, and who, but for this apparent primitive sanction, would have shrunk from the bold irreverent inquiries and the idle subtilties, which

[a] Cudworth, Intell. Syst. i. 4. § 36

are the tokens of the genuine Arian temper. Nor was the allegorical principle of Eclecticism incompatible with the instruments of the Sophist. This also in the hands of a dexterous disputant, particularly in attack, would become more serviceable to the heretical, than to the orthodox cause. For, inasmuch as the Arians professed to be asking for reasons for their faith, evidence resting on allegorisms did not silence a pertinacious objector, but at the same time, it suggested to him the means of evading those more argumentative proofs of the Catholic doctrine, which are built upon the explicit and literal testimonies of Scripture. It was notoriously the artifice of Arius, which has been since more boldly adopted by modern heretics, to explain away its clearest declarations by a forced figurative exposition. Here that peculiar subtilty in the use of language, in which his school excelled, supported and extended the application of the allegorical rule, recommended, as it was, to the unguarded believer, and thrust upon the more wary, by its previous reception among the most illustrious ornaments, and truest champions of the Apostolic faith.

Eclectics in Syria.

There is no sufficient evidence in history that the Arians made this use of Neo-Platonism[a] till some time after their existence as a party. I believe they did not; and from the facts of the history, conclude Eusebius of Cæsarea to be the first to point it out to them: but some persons may attach importance to the circumstance, that Syria was a chief seat of the philosophy from its very first appearance. The virtuous and amiable Alexander Severus openly professed its creed in his Syrian court, and in consequence of this profession, extended his favour to the Jewish nation. Zenobia, a Jewess in religion, succeeded Alexander in her taste for heathen literature, and attachment to the syncretistic philosophy. Her instructor in the Greek language, the celebrated Longinus, had been the pupil of Ammonius, and was the early master of Porphyry, the most bitter opponent of Christianity that issued from the Eclectic school. Afterwards, Amelius, the friend and successor of Plotinus, transferred the seat of the philosophy from Rome to Laodicea in Syria; which became re-

[a] There seems to have been a much earlier coalition between the Platonic and Ebionitish doctrines, if the works attributed to the Roman Clement may be taken in evidence of it. Mosheim (de turb. Eccl. § 34) says both the Recognitions and Clementines are infected with the latter, and the Clementines with the former doctrine. These works were written between A. D. 180 and A. D. 250: are they to be referred to the school of Theodotus and Artemon, which was humanitarian and Roman, expressly claimed the *Bishops* of Rome as countenancing its errors, and falsified the Scriptures at least? Plotinus came to Rome A. D. 244, and Philostratus commenced his life of Apollonius there as early as A. D. 217. This would account for the Platonism of the later of the two compositions, and its absence from the former.

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markable for the number and fame of its Eclectics.[a] In the next century, Iamblicus and Libanius, the friend of Julian, both belonged to the Syrian branch of the sect. It is remarkable that, in the mean time, its Alexandrian branch declined in reputation on the death of Ammonius; probably, in consequence of the hostility it met with from the Church which had the misfortune to give it birth.

SECTION V.

SABELLIANISM.

SECT. V. Bearing of Sabellianism on Arianism.

ONE subject more must be discussed in illustration of the conduct of the Alexandrian school, and the circumstances under which the Arian heresy rose and extended itself. The Sabellianism which preceded it, has often been considered the occasion of it;—viz. by a natural re-action from one error into its opposite; to make an undue difference between the Father and the Son with the Arians, being the contrary heresy to that of making no difference at all with the Sabellians. Here, however, Sabellianism shall be considered neither as the proximate nor the remote cause, or even occasion, of Arianism; but first, as drawing off the attention of the Church from the prospective evil of the philosophical spirit; next, as suggesting such reasonings, and naturalizing such expressions and positions in the doctrinal statements of the orthodox, as seemed to countenance the opposite error; lastly, as providing an excuse for Arianism when it arose: i. e. it is here altogether regarded as facilitating rather than originating the disturbances occasioned by that heresy.

First school of Sabellianism.

The history of the heresy, afterwards called Sabellian, is obscure. Its peculiar tenet is the denial of the distinction of Persons in the Divine Nature; or the doctrine of the *μοναρχία* as it is called by a like assumption of exclusive correctness, which has led to the term "Unitarianism" at the present day.[b] It was first maintained as a characteristic of party by a school established, (as it appears,) in Proconsular Asia, towards the end of the second century. This school, of which Noetus was the most noted master, is supposed to be an offshoot of the Gnostics; and doubtless it is historically connected with branches of that numerous family. Irenæus is said to have written against it; which either proves its antiquity, or seems

[a] Mosheim, diss. de turb. Eccl. § 11.
[b] Burton, Bampt. Lect. Note 103.

to imply its origination in those previous Gnostic systems, against which his extant work is entirely directed.[a] It may be added, that Simon Magus, the founder of the Gnostics certainly held a doctrine resembling that advocated by the Sabellians.

Praxeas.

At the end of the second century, Praxeas, a presbyter of Ephesus, passed from the early school already mentioned to Rome. Meeting there with that determined resistance which honourably distinguishes the primitive Roman Church in its dealings with heresy, he retired into Africa, where, founding no sect, his memory was soon forgotten. However, the doubts and speculations which he had published, concerning the great doctrine in dispute, remained alive there, though latent;[b] till they burst into a flame about the middle of the third century, at the eventful era when the rudiments of Arianism were laid by the sophistical school at Antioch.

Sabellius.

The author of this new disturbance was Sabellius, from whom the heresy has since taken its name. He was a bishop or presbyter in Pentapolis, a district of Cyrenaica, included within the territory, afterwards called, and then virtually forming, the Alexandrian Patriarchate. Other bishops in his neighbourhood adopting his sentiments, his doctrine became so popular among a clergy, already prepared for it, or hitherto unpractised in the necessity of a close adherence to the authorized formularies of faith, that in a short time, (to use the words of Athanasius,) "the Son of God was scarcely preached in the Churches." Dionysius of Alexandria, as primate, give his judgment in writing; but being misunderstood by some orthodox, but over-zealous brethren, was in turn accused by them, before the Roman see, of advocating the opposite error, afterwards the Arian; and in consequence, instead of checking the heresy, found himself involved in a controversy in defence of his own opinions.[c] Nothing more is known concerning the Sabellians for above a hundred years; when it is inferred from the Council of Constantinople (A. D. 381,) rejecting their baptism, that they formed at that time a communion distinct from the Catholic Church.

Second school of Sabellianism.

Another school of heresy also denominated Sabellian, is obscurely discernible even earlier than the Ephesian, among the Montanists of Phrygia. The well-known doctrine of these fanatics, when adopted by minds less heated than its original propagators, evidently tended to a denial of the Personality of the Holy Spirit. Montanus himself probably was never capable of soberly reflecting on the meaning of his own words; but even in his life-time, Æschines, one of his disciples, saw their

[a] Dodwell in Iren. diss. vi. 26

[b] Vid. Tertull. in Prax. 3.

[c] Vid. Athan. de Sent Dionys.

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real drift, and openly maintained the unreserved monarchia of the Divine nature.[a] Hence it is usual for ancient writers to class the Sabellians and Montanists together, as if coinciding in their doctrinal views.[b] The success of Æschines in extending his heresy in Asia Minor, was considerable, if we may judge from the condition of that country at a later period.—Gregory, the pupil of Origen, whose bishopric was in the neighbourhood, appears to have made a successful stand against it. Certainly his writings were employed in the controversy after his death, and that with such effect, as completely to banish it from Pontus, though an attempt was made to revive it in the time of Basil, (A. D. 375.[c])—In the patriarchate of Antioch we first hear of it, at the beginning of the third century, Origen reclaiming from it Beryllus, Bishop of Bostra, in Arabia. In the next generation the martyr Lucian is said to have been a vigorous opponent of it; and he was at length betrayed to his heathen persecutors by a Sabellian presbyter of the Church of Antioch. At a considerably later date (A. D. 375,) we hear of it in Mesopotamia.[d]

At first sight it may seem an assumption to refer these various exhibitions of heterodoxy in Asia Minor. and the East, to some one school or system, merely on the ground of their distinguishing tenet being substantially the same. And certainly, in treating an obscure subject, on which the opinions of learned men differ, it must be owned that conjecture is the utmost that I am able to offer. The following statement will at once supply the grounds on which the above arrangement has been made, and explain the real nature of the doctrine itself in which the heresy consisted.

First form of the Sabell tenet.

Let it be considered then, whether there were not two kinds of Sabellianism; the one taught by Praxeas, the other somewhat resembling, though less material than, the Gnostic theology:—the latter being a modification of the former, arising from the pressure of the controversy: e. g. parallel to the change which is said to have taken place in the doctrine of the Ebionites, and in that of the followers of Paulus of Samosata. Those who denied the distinction of Persons in the Divine Nature, were met by the ready inquiry, in what sense they believed God to be united to the human nature of Christ. The more orthodox, but the more assailable answer to this question, was to confess that God was literally one with Christ, and therefore, (on their Monarchistic principle,) in no sense distinct from Him. This was the more orthodox answer, as preserving inviolate what is theologically called the doctrine

[a] Tillemont, Mem. vol ii. p. 204.
[b] Vales ad Socr i. 23, Soz ii 18.
[c] Basil. Epist. ccx. § 3
[d] Epiphan hær. lxii. 1

of the hypostatic union,—the only safeguard against a gradual declension into the Ebionite, or modern Socinian heresy. But at the same time it was repugnant to the plainest suggestions of Scripturally-enlightened reason, which leads us to argue that, according to the obvious meaning of the inspired text, there is *some* real sense in which the Father is not the Son; that the Sender and the Sent cannot be in all respects the same; nor can the Son be said to make Himself inferior to the Father, and condescend to become man; to come from God, and then again to return to Him; if, after all, there is no distinction beyond that of words, between those Blessed and Adorable Agents in the scheme of redemption. Besides, without venturing to intrude into things not as yet seen, it appeared evident to the primitive Church, that, in matter of fact, the Son of God, though equal in dignity of nature to the Father, yet was described as undertaking such offices of ministration and subjection, as are never ascribed, and therefore may not without blasphemy be ascribed, to the self-existent Father. Accordingly, the name of Patripassian was affixed to Praxeas, Noetus, and their followers, in memorial of the unscriptural tenet which was immediately involved in their denial of the distinction of Persons in the Godhead.

Patripassians.

Such doubtless was the doctrine of Sabellius, if regard be paid to the express declarations of the Fathers. The discriminating Athanasius plainly affirms it, in his defence of Dionysius.[a] The Semi-Arian Creed called the Macrostyche, published at Antioch, gives a like testimony;[b] distinguishing, moreover, between the Sabellian doctrine, and the doctrines of the Paulianists and Photinians, to which some modern critics have compared it. Cyprian and Austin, living in Africa, bear express witness to the existence of the Patripassian sect.[c] On the other hand, it cannot be denied, that authorities exist favourable to a view of the doctrine, different from the above, which certain theological writers have advocated;[d] and these accordingly may lead us, without interfering with the account of it already given, to describe a modification of it which commonly succeeded its primitive form.

Second form of the Sabellian tenet. Emanatists.

The following apparently inconsistent testimonies, suggest both the history and the doctrine of the second form of Sabellianism. While the Montanists and Sabellians are classed together by some authors, there is separate evidence of the connexion of each of these with the Gnostics. Again, Ambrosius, the convert and friend of Origen was originally a Va-

[a] De sent. Dionys § 5. 9, &c.

[b] Athan. de Synod. § 26.

[c] Cyprian. Epist. lxxiii. Tillemont, Mem. iv. 100.

[d] Beausobre Hist. de Manich iii. 6. § 7. Mosheim de reb. ant. Const. sæc. ii. § 68. sæc iii § 32. Lardner Cred. part. ii. ch. 41.

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lentinian, *or* Marcionite, *or* Sabellian, according to different writers. Further, the doctrine of Sabellius is compared to that of Valentinus by Alexander of Alexandria, and (apparently) by a Roman council (A. D. 324); and by St. Austin it is referred indifferently to Praxeas, or to Hermogenes, a Gnostic. On the other hand, one Leucius is described as a Gnostic and Montanist.[a] It would appear then, that it is so repugnant to the plain word of Scripture, and to the most elementary notions of doctrine thence derived, to suppose that Almighty God is in every sense one with the human nature of Christ, that a disputant, especially an innovator, cannot long maintain such a position. It removes the mystery of the Trinity, only by leaving the doctrine of the Incarnation in a form still more strange, than that which it unavoidably presents to the imagination. Pressed, accordingly, by the authority of Scripture, the Sabellian, instead of speaking of the literal inhabitation of God in Christ, would probably begin to obscure his meaning in the decorum of a mystical or figurative language. He would speak of the *presence* rather than the existence of God in His chosen servant; and this presence, if allowed to declaim, he would represent as a certain power or *emanation* from the Centre of light and truth; if forced by his opponent into a definite statement, he would own to be but an inspiration, the same in kind, though superior in degree, to that which enlightened and guided the prophets. This is that second form of the Sabellian tenet, which some learned moderns have illustrated, though they must be considered to err in pronouncing it the only true one. That it should have resulted from the difficulties of the Patripassian creed, is natural and almost necessary; and viewed merely as a conjecture, the above account of its rise, reconciles the discordant testimonies of ecclesiastical history. But we have almost certain evidence of the matter of fact in Tertullian's tract against Praxeas,[b] where the latter is apparently represented as holding *successively*, the two views of doctrine which have been here described. Parallel instances meet us in the history of the Gnostics and Montanists. Simon Magus, (e. g.) seems to have adopted the Patripassian theory. But the Gnostic family which branched from him, modified it by means of their doctrine of emanations or æons, till in the theology of Valentinus, as in that of Cerinthus and Ebion, the incarnation of the Word, became scarcely more than the display of Divine power with a figurative personality in the life and actions of a mere man. The Montanists, in like manner, from a virtual assumption of the Divinity of their founder, were led on, as the only

[a] Vid Tillemont vol. ii. p. 204. iv p 100. &c. Waterland's Works, vol. i. p 236, 237

[b] In Prax. § 27.

way of extricating themselves from one blasphemy, into that other of denying the Personality of the Holy Spirit, and then of the Word. Whether the school of Noetus maintained its first position, we have no means of knowing; but the change to the second, or semi-humanitarian, may be detected in the Sabellians, as in Praxeas before them. In the time of Dionysius of Alexandria, the majority was Patripassian; but in the time of Alexander, they advocated the Emanative, as it may be called, or in-dwelling theory.[a]

Effect upon the language of orthodox controversialists.

What there is further to be said on this subject, shall be reserved for the next chapter. Here, however, it is necessary to examine, how under these circumstances, the controversy with them would affect the language of ecclesiastical theology. It will be readily seen, that the line of argument by which the two errors above specified are to be met, is nearly the same: viz. that of insisting upon the personality of the Word as distinct from the Father. For the Patripassian denied that He was in any real respect *distinct* from Him; the Emanatist, if he may so be called, denied that He was a *Person*, or more than an extraordinary manifestation of Divine Power. The Catholics on the other hand, asserted His *distinct personality*; and necessarily appealed, in proof of this, to such texts as speak of His pre-existent relations towards the Father; in other words, His essentially ministrative office in the revealed Economy of the Godhead. And thus, being obliged from the course of the controversy, to dwell on the truly scriptural tenet of the subordination of the Son to the Father, and happening to do so without a protest against a denial of His equality with the Father in the One Indivisible Divine Nature, (a protest, which nothing but the actual presence of that error among them could render necessary or natural,) they were sometimes forced by the circumstances of the case into an apparent anticipation of the heresy, which afterwards arose in the shape of Arianism.

Illustrations

This may be illustrated in the history of the two great pupils of Origen, who, being respectively opposed to the two varieties of heresy above described, incurred odium in a later age, as if they had been forerunners of Arius: Gregory of Neocæsarea, and Dionysius of Alexandria.

Dionysius.

The controversy in which Dionysius was engaged with the Patripassians of Pentapolis has already been adverted to. Their tenet of the incarnation of the Father, (i. e. the one God without distinction of Persons,) a tenet most repugnant to every scripturally-informed mind, was refuted at once, by insisting on the essential character of the Son as representing and revealing the Father; by arguing, that on the very face of

[a] Theod. Hist. i. 4

Scripture, the Christ Who is there set before us, (whatever might be the mystery of His nature,) is certainly delineated as one absolute and real Person, complete in Himself, sent by the Father, doing His will, and mediating between Him and man; and that, this being the case, His Person could not be the same with that of the Father Who sent Him, by any process of reasoning, which would not also prove any two individual men to have one literal personality; i. e. if there be any analogy at all between the common sense of the word person and that in which the idea is applied in Scripture to the Father and the Son: e. g. by what artifice of interpretation can the beginning of St. John's Gospel, or the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians be made to harmonize with the notion, that the one God, simply became, and is man, in every sense in which He can still be spoken of as God?

Defends himself against the charge of Arianizing.

Writing zealously and freely on this side of the Catholic doctrine, Dionysius laid himself open to the animadversion of timid and narrow-minded men, who were unwilling to receive the truth in that depth and fulness in which Scripture reveals it, and who thought that orthodoxy consisted in being at all times careful to comprehend in one confession the whole of what is believed on any article of faith. The Roman Church, even then celebrated for its vigilant, perhaps its over-earnest exactness, in matters of doctrine and discipline, was made the arbiter of the controversy.—A council was held under the presidency of Dionysius its bishop, (about A. D. 260.) in which the Alexandrian prelate was accused by the Pentapolitans of asserting, that the Son of God is made and created, distinct in nature from the incommunicable essence of the Father, "as the vine is distinct from the vine-dresser," and in consequence, not eternal.—The illustration imputed to Dionysius in this accusation, being a reference to John xv. is a sufficient explanation by itself of the real drift of his statement, even if his satisfactory answer were not extant, to set at rest all doubt concerning his orthodoxy. He therein replies to his namesake of Rome,—first, that his letter to the Sabellians, being directed against a particular error, of course contained only so much of the entire Catholic doctrine as was necessary for the point in debate;—that his use of the words *Father* and *Son*, in itself, implied his belief in a oneness of nature between Them;—that, in speaking of the Son as "made," he had no intention of distinguishing "made" from "begotten," but including all kinds of origination under the term, he used it to discriminate between the Son and His underived self-originated Father;—lastly, that in matter of fact he *did* confess the Catholic doctrine in its most unqualified and literal sense, and in its fullest and most accurate exposition. In this letter he even recognises the celebrated ὁμοούσιον which was afterwards adopted

at Nicæa. However, in spite of these avowals, later writers, and even Basil himself, do not scruple to complain of Dionysius as having sown the first seeds of Arianism; confessing the while that his error was accidental, occasioned by his vehement opposition to the Sabellian heresy.

Gregory.

Gregory of Neocæsarea, on the other hand, is so far more hardly circumstanced than Dionysius; first, inasmuch as the charge against him was not made till after his death, and next, because he is strangely accused of a tendency to Sabellian as well as Arian errors. Without accounting for the former of these charges, which does not now concern us, I offer to the reader the following explanation of the latter calumny. Sabellianism, in its second or emanative form, had considerable success in the East before and at the time of Gregory. In the generation before him, Hermogenes, who professed it, had been refuted by Theophilus and Tertullian, as well as by Gregory's master Origen, who had also reclaimed from a similar error Ambrosius and Beryllus.[a] Gregory succeeded him in the controversy with such vigour, that his polemical remains were sufficient to extinguish the heresy, when it re-appeared in Pontus at a later period. He was, moreover, the principal prelate in the first council held against Paulus of Samosata, whose heresy was derived from the emanative school. The synodal letter addressed by the assembled bishops to the heresiarch, whether we ascribe it to this first Council, with some critics, or with others to the second, or even with Basnage reject it as spurious, at least illustrates the line of argument which it was natural to direct against the heresy, and shows how easily it might be corrupted into an Arian meaning. To the notion that the Son was but inhabited by a divine power or presence impersonal, and therefore had no real existence before He came in the flesh, it was a sufficient answer to appeal to the great works ascribed to Him in the beginning of all things, and especially to those angelic manifestations by which God revealed Himself to the elder Church, and which were universally admitted to be disclosures of the living and personal Word. The synodal letter accordingly professes a belief in the Son, as the Image and Power of God, Which was before the worlds, in literal and absolute existence, the living and intelligent Cause of creation; and cites some of the most striking texts descriptive of His ministrative office under the Jewish law, such as His appearance to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses in the burning bush.[b] Such is the statement, in oppo-

[a] Euseb Hist. iv. 24. Theod. Hær i. 19. Tertull. in Hermog. Huet. Origen. lib. i. It may be observed, however, that Hippolytus wrote against *Noetus*

[b] Routh, Reliq Sacr vol. ii. p 463.

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sition to Paulus of Samosata, put forth by Gregory and his associate bishops at Antioch; and, the circumstances of the controversy being overlooked, it is obvious how easily it may be brought to favour the hypothesis, that the Son is in all respects distinct from the Father, and by nature as well as revealed office inferior to Him.

The ὁμοούσιον

Lastly, it so happened, that in the course of the third century, the word ὁμοούσιον became more or less connected with the Gnostic, Manichæan, and Sabellian theologies. Hence writers, who had but opposed these heresies, seemed in a subsequent age to have opposed what was then received as the characteristic of orthodoxy; as, on the other hand, the Catholics, on their adopting it then, were accused of Sabellianizing, or of introducing corporeal notions into their creed. But of this more hereafter.

Recapitulation.

Here a close may be put to our inquiry into the circumstances under which Arianism appeared in the early Church. The utmost that has been proposed has been to classify and arrange phenomena which present themselves on the surface of the history; and this, with a view of preparing the reader for the direct discussion of the doctrine which Arianism denied, and for the proceedings on the part of the Church which that denial occasioned. Especially has it been my object in this introduction, following the steps of our great divines, to rescue the Alexandrian Fathers from the calumnies which, with bad intentions either to them or to the orthodox cause, have been so freely and so fearlessly cast upon them.—Whether Judaism or whether Platonism had more or less to do in preparing the way for the Arian heresy, are points of minor importance, compared with the vindication of those venerable men, the most learned, most eloquent, and most zealous of the Anti-Nicene Christians. With this view it has been shown, that, though the heresy openly commenced, it but accidentally commenced in Alexandria; that no Alexandrian of name advocated it: and that, on its appearance, it was forthwith expelled from the Alexandrian Church, together with its author;—next, that even granting Platonism originated it, of which there is no proof, yet there are no grounds for implicating the Alexandrian Fathers in its formation; that while the old Platonism, which they did favour, had no part in the origination of the Arian doctrine, the new Platonism or Eclecticism which may be conceived to have arianized, received no countenance from them; that if Eclecticism must abstractedly be referred to their schools, it arose out of them in no more exact sense than error ever springs from truth; that, instead of being welcomed by them, the sight of it as soon as it was detected, led them rather to condemn their own older and innocent philosophy; and that, in Alexandria, there was no Eclectic successor to Ammonius, (who

concealed his infidelity to the last,) till after the commencement of the Arian troubles;—further, that granting, (what is undeniable,) that the Alexandrian Fathers sometimes use phrases which are similar to those afterwards adopted by the heretics; that these were the accidents, not the characteristic marks of their creed, and employed from a studied verbal imitation of the Jewish and philosophical systems;—of the philosophical, to conceal their own depth of meaning, and to conciliate the heathen, a duty to which their peculiar functions in the Christian world especially bound them,—and of the Jewish theology, from an affectionate reverence for the early traces, in the Old Testament, of God's long-meditated scheme of mercy to mankind; or again, that where they seem to arianize, it is from incompleteness rather than unsoundness in their confessions, occasioned by the necessity of opposing a contrary error then infecting the Church; that five Fathers, who have more especially incurred the charge of philosophizing in their creed, come from the schools of Rome, Lyons, and Antioch, as well as of Alexandria, and that the most unguarded speculator in the Alexandrian is the very writer first to detect for us, and to denounce the Arian tenet, at least sixty years before it openly presented itself to the world.

On the other hand, if, dismissing this side of the question, we ask whence the heresy actually arose, we find that contemporary authors, ascribe it partially to Judaism and Eclecticism, and more expressly to the influence of the Sophists; that Alexander, to whose lot it fell first to withstand it, refers us at once to Antioch as its original seat, to Judaism as its ultimate source, and to the subtilties of disputation as the instrument of its exhibition: that Arius and his principal supporters were pupils of the school of Antioch; and lastly, that in this school at the date fixed by Alexander, the above-mentioned elements of the heresy are discovered in alliance, almost in union, Paulus of Samosata, the judaizing Sophist, being the favourite of a court which patronized Eclecticism, when it was neglected at Alexandria.

It is evident that deeper and more interesting questions remain, than any which have here been examined. The real secret causes of the heresy; its connexion with the character of the age, with the opinions then afloat, viewed as an active moral principle, not as a system; its position in the general course of God's providential dealings with His Church, and in the prophecies of the New Testament; and its relation towards the subsequently-developed corruptions of Christianity; these are subjects, towards which some opening may have been incidentally made for the inquiring mind, but which are too vast to be imagined in the design of a work such as the present.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

SECTION I.

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE FORMATION AND IMPOSITION OF CREEDS.

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It has appeared in the foregoing chapter, that the temper of the Anti-Nicene Church was opposed to the imposition of doctrinal tests upon her members; and on the other hand, that such a measure became necessary in proportion as the cogency of Apostolic Tradition was weakened by lapse of time. This is a subject which will bear some further remarks; and will lead to an investigation of the principle upon which the formation and imposition of creeds rests. After this, I shall delineate the Catholic doctrine itself, as held in the first ages of Christianity; and then, the Arian substitution for it.

Knowledge of the Christian mysteries a privilege in the Primitive Church;

I have already observed, that the knowledge of the Christian mysteries was, in those times, accounted as a *privilege*, to be eagerly coveted. It was not likely, then, that reception of them would be accounted a *test;* which implies a concession on the part of the recipient, not an advantage. The idea of disbelieving, or criticising the great doctrines of the faith, from the nature of the case, would scarcely occur to the primitive Christians. These doctrines were the subject of an Apostolical Tradition; they were the very truths which had been lately revealed to mankind. They had been committed to the Church's keeping, and were dispensed by her to those who sought them, as a favour. They were facts, not opinions. To come to the Church was all one with expressing a readiness to receive her teaching; to hesitate to believe, after coming for the sake of believing, would be an inconsistency too rare to require a special provision against the chance of it. It was sufficient to meet the evil as it arose: the power of excommunication and deposition was in the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities, and, as in the case of Paulus, was used impartially. Yet, in the matter of fact, such instances of contumacy were comparatively rare; and the Anti-Nicene heresies were in many instances the innovations of those who had never been in the Church, or who had already been expelled from it.

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Conveyed by tradition.

We have some difficulty in putting ourselves into the situation of Christians in those times, from the circumstance that the Holy Scriptures are now our sole means of satisfying ourselves on points of doctrine. Thus, every one who comes to the Church considers himself entitled to judge and decide individually upon its creed. But in that primitive age, the Apostolical Tradition, i. e. the creed, was practically the chief source of instruction, especially considering the obscurities of Scripture; and being withdrawn from public view, it could not be subjected to the degradation of a comparison, on the part of inquirers and half-Christians, with those written documents which are vouchsafed to us from the same inspired authorities. As for the baptized and incorporate members of the Church, they of course had the privilege of comparing the written and the oral tradition, and might exercise it as profitably as that of comparing and harmonising Scripture with itself. But before baptism, the systematic knowledge was withheld; and without it, Scripture, instead of being the source of instruction on the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, was scarcely more than a sealed book, needing an interpretation, amply and powerfully as it served the purpose of *proving* the doctrines, when they were once disclosed. And so much on the reluctance of the primitive Fathers to publish creeds, on the ground that the knowledge of Christian doctrine was a *privilege* reserved for those who were baptised, and in no sense a subject of hesitation and dispute.—It may be added, that the very love of power, which in every age will sway the bulk of those who are exposed to the temptation of it, and ecclesiastics in the number, would indispose them to innovate upon a principle which made themselves the especial guardians of revealed truth.[a]

Reverence observed towards them.

Their backwardness proceeded also from a profound reverence for the sacred mysteries of which they were the dispensers. Here they present us with the true exhibition of that pious sensitiveness which the heathen had conceived, but could not justly execute. The latter had their mysteries, but their rude attempts were superseded by the divine discipline of the Gospel, which here acted in the office which is peculiarly its own, rectifying, combining, and completing the inventions of uninstructed nature. If the early Church regarded the very knowledge of the truth as a fearful privilege, much more did it regard that truth itself as glorious and awful; and scarcely conversing about it to her children, shrunk from the impiety of subjecting it to the hard gaze of the multitude.[b] We still

[a] Vid. Hawkins on Unauthoritative Tradition.

[b] Sozomen gives this reason for not inserting the Nicene Creed in his history. εὐσεβῶν καὶ φίλων καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἰσ στηλεύειν, οἷα δὴ μύσταις καὶ μυσταγωγοῖς δέοντα

pray, in the Confirmation service, for those who are introduced into the full privileges of the Christian covenant, that they may be "filled with the spirit of God's holy fear;" but the meaning and practical results of deep-seated religious reverence were far better understood in the primitive times than now, when the infidelity of the world has corrupted the Church. Now, we allow ourselves publicly to canvass the most solemn truths in a careless or fiercely argumentative way; truths, which it is as useless as it is unseemly to discuss before men, as being attainable only by the sober and watchful, by slow degrees, with dependence on the Giver of wisdom, and with strict obedience to the light which has already been granted. Then, they would scarcely express in writing, what is now not only preached to the mixed crowds who frequent our churches, but circulated in print among all ranks and classes of the unclean and the profane, and pressed upon all who choose to purchase it. Nay, so perplexed is the present state of things, that the Church is obliged to change her course of acting, after the spirit of the alteration made at Nicæa, and unwillingly to take part in the theological discussions of the day, as a man crushes venomous creatures of necessity, powerful to do it, but loathing the employment. This is the apology which the author of the present work, as far as it is worth while to notice himself, offers to all sober-minded and zealous Christians, for venturing to exhibit publicly the great evangelical doctrines, not indeed in the medium of controversy or proof, (which would be a still more humiliating office,) but in an historical and explanatory form. And he earnestly trusts, that, while doing so, he may be betrayed into no familiarity or extravagance of expression, cautiously lowering the Truth, and, (as it were,) wrapping it in reverend language, and so depositing it in its due resting-place, which is the Christian's heart; guiltless of those unutterable profanations with which a scrutinizing infidelity wounds and lacerates it. Here, again, is strikingly instanced the unfitness of books, compared with private communication, for the purposes of religious instruction; levelling the distinctions of mind and temper by the formality of the written character, and conveying each kind of knowledge the less perfectly, in proportion as it is of a moral nature, and requires to be treated with delicacy and discrimination.

Profane conduct of heretical sects.

To return to the primitive Fathers.—With their reverential feelings towards the Supreme Being, great must have been their indignation first, and then their perplexity, when apostates disclosed and corrupted the sacred truth, or when the heretical or philosophical sects made guesses approximating to it.

λέγειν καὶ ἀκούειν ὑφηγουμένων ἐπῄνεσα τὴν βουλήν· οὐ γὰρ ἀπεικὸς καὶ τῶν ἀμυήτων τινὰς τῇδε τῇ βίβλῳ ἐντυχεῖν· ὡς ἔνι δὴ, τῶν ἀποῤῥήτων ἃ χρὴ σιωπᾶν ἀποκρυψάμενον i. 20.

Though the heretics also had their mysteries, yet, it is remarkable, that as regards the high doctrines of the Gospel, they in great measure dropped that restraint and reserve by which the Catholics partly signified, and partly secured a reverence for them. Tertullian sharply exposes the want of a grave and orderly discipline among them in his day. "It is uncertain," he says "who among them is catechumen, who believer. They meet alike, they hear alike, they pray alike; nay, though the heathen should drop in, they will cast holy things to dogs, and their pearls, false jewels as they are, to swine. This overthrow of order they call simplicity, and our attention to it they call meretricious embellishment. They communicate with all men promiscuously; it being nothing to them how different each other's views, provided they join with them for the destruction of the truth. They are all high-minded; all boast of their illumination. Their catechumens are established in the faith before they are fully taught. Even their women are singularly forward; venturing, that is, to teach, to argue, to exorcise, to undertake religious duties, nay, perhaps to baptise." [a]

Of the Arians.

The heretical spirit is ever one and the same in its various forms: this description of the Gnostics was exactly paralleled, in all those points for which we have introduced it here, in the history of Arianism; historically distinct as is the latter system from Gnosticism. Arius began by throwing out his questions as a subject of debate for public consideration; and at once formed crowds of controversialists, from those classes who were the least qualified or deserving to take part in the discussion. Alexander, his diocesan, accuses him of siding with the Jews and heathen against the Church; and certainly we learn from the historians, that the heathen philosophers were from the first warmly interested in the dispute, so that some of them attended the Nicene Council, for the chance of ascertaining the orthodox doctrine. Alexander also charges him with employing women in his disturbance of the Church, apparently referring at the same time to the Apostle's anticipated description of them. He speaks especially of the younger females as zealous in his cause, and traversing Alexandria in their eagerness to promote it;—a fact confirmed by Epiphanius, who speaks, (if he may be credited,) of as many as seven hundred from the religious societies of that city at once taking part with the heresiarch.[b] But Arius carried his agitation lower still. It is on no less unsuspicious authority than that of Philostorgius, his own partizan, on which we are assured of his composing and setting to music, songs on the subject of his doctrine for the use of the rudest classes of society, with a

[a] Tertull. de Præscr. hæret. § 41.
[b] Soc. i. 6. Theod. Hist. i. 4. Soz. i. 18. Epiph. hær. lxix. 3.

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view of familiarizing them to it. Other of his compositions, of a higher literary excellence, were used at table as a religious accompaniment to the ordinary meal; one of which, in part preserved by Athanasius, enters upon the most sacred portions of the theological question.[a] The effect of these exertions to draw public attention to his doctrine, is recorded by Eusebius of Cæsarea, who, though no friend of the heresiarch himself, is unsuspicious evidence as one of his party. "From a little spark a great fire was kindled. The quarrel began in the Alexandrian Church, then it spread through the whole of Egypt, Libya, and the Thebais; then it ravaged the other provinces and cities, till the war of words enlisted not only the prelates of the Churches, but the laity too. At length the exposure was so extraordinary, that even in the heathen theatres, the holy doctrine became the subject of the vilest ridicule."[b] Such was Arianism at its commencement; and if so indecent in the hands of its originator, who, in spite of his courting the multitude, was distinguished by a certain reserve and loftiness in his personal deportment, much more flagrant was its impiety under the direction of his less refined successors. Valens, the favorite bishop of Constantius, exposed the solemnities of the Eucharist in a judicial examination to which Jews and heathens were admitted; Eudoxius, the Arianizer of the Gothic nations, when installed in the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, uttered as his first words a profane jest, which was received with loud laughter in the newly consecrated Church of St. Sophia; and Aetius, the founder of the Anomœans, was the grossest and most despicable of buffoons.[c] Later still, we find the same description of the heretical party from the pen of the kind and amiable Nazianzen. With a reference to the Arian troubles he says, "Now is priest an empty name; contempt is poured upon the rulers, as Scripture says. . . . . All fear is banished from our souls, irreverence has taken its place. Knowledge is now at the will of him who chooses it, and all the deep mysteries of the Spirit. We are all pious, but our sole warrant is our practice of condemning the impiety of others. We use the ungodly as arbiters, and cast what is holy to dogs, and pearls before swine, publishing divine truths to profane hearts and ears; and, wretches as we are, we sedulously fulfil the wishes of our enemies, and unblushingly break the vow which binds our virgin faith to God."[d]

Perplexity of the Catholics.

Enough has now been said, by way of describing the condition of the Catholic Church, defenceless from the very sacredness and refinement of its discipline, when the attack

[a] Philost. ii. 2. Athan. in Arian. i. 5. de Syn. 15.
[b] Euseb. vit. Const. ii. 61. vid. Greg. Naz. orat. i. 142.
[c] Athan. Apol. contr. Arian. 31. Socr. ii. 43. Cave, Hist. Literar. vol. i.
[d] Greg. Naz. Orat. i. 135.

of Arianism was made upon it; insulting its silence, provoking it to argue, unsettling and seducing its members, and in consequence requiring its authoritative judgment on the point in dispute. And in addition to the instruments of evil which were internally directed against it, the Eclectics had by this time extended their creed among the learned, with far greater decorum than the Arians, but still so as practically to interpret the Scriptures in the place of the Church, and to state dogmatically the conclusions for which the Arian Sophists were but indirectly preparing the mind by their objections and fallacious arguments.

Their duty.

Under these circumstances, it was the duty of the rulers of the Church, at whatever sacrifice of their feelings, to discuss the subject in controversy fully and unreservedly, and to state their decision openly. The only alternative was an unmanly non-interference, and an arbitrary or treacherous prohibition of the discussion. To enjoin silence on perplexed inquirers, is not to silence their thoughts; which in the case of serious minds, naturally turn to the spiritual ruler for advice and relief, and are disappointed at the timidity, or irritated at the harshness of those, who refuse to lead a lawful inquiry which they cannot stifle. Such a course, then, is most unwise as well as unfeeling, inasmuch as it throws the question in dispute upon other arbitrators; or rather, it is more commonly insincere, the traitorous act of those who care little for the question in dispute, and are content that opinions should secretly prevail which they profess to condemn. The Nicene Fathers might despair of reclaiming the Arian party, but they were bound to erect a witness for the truth, which might be a guide and a warning to all Catholics, against the lying spirit which was abroad in the Church. These remarks apply to a censure which is sometimes passed on them, as if it was their duty to have shut up the question in the words of Scripture; for the words of Scripture were the very subject in controversy, and to have prohibited the controversy, would in fact, have been but to insult the perplexed, and to extend real encouragement to the insidious opponent of the truth.—But it may be expedient here to explain more fully the principle of the obligation which led to their interposition.

Let it be observed then, that as regards the doctrine of the Trinity, the mere text of Scripture is not calculated either to *satisfy the intellect* or to *ascertain the temper* of those who profess to accept it as a rule of faith.

The systematic doctrine of the Trinity addressed to the intellect.

1. Before the mind has been roused to reflection and inquisitiveness about its own acts and impressions, it acquiesces, if religiously trained, in that practical devotion to the Blessed Trinity, and implicit acknowledgment of the divinity of Son and Spirit, which holy Scripture at once teaches and exem-

plifies. This is the faith of uneducated men, which is not the less philosophically correct, nor less acceptable to God, because it does not happen to be conceived in those precise statements which presuppose the action of the mind on its own sentiments and notions. Moral feelings do not directly contemplate and realize to themselves the objects which excite them. A heathen in obeying his conscience, implicitly worships Him of Whom he has never distinctly heard. Again, a child feels not the less affectionate reverence towards his parents, because he cannot discriminate in words, nay, or idea, between them and others. As, however, his mind opens, he might ask himself concerning the ground of his own emotions and conduct towards them: and might find that these are the correlatives of their peculiar tenderness towards him, long and intimate knowledge of him, and unhesitating assumption of authority over him; all which he continually experiences. And further, he might trace these to the essential relation itself, which involves his own original debt to them for the gift of life and reason, the inestimable blessing of an indestructible, never-ending existence. And now his reason contemplates the object of those affections, which acted truly from the first, and are not purer or stronger merely for this accession of knowledge. This will tend to illustrate the sacred subject to which we are directing our attention. As the intellect is cultivated and expanded, it cannot refrain from the attempt to analyze the vision which influences the heart, and the Object in which it centres; nor does it stop till it has, in some sort, succeeded in expressing in words, what has all along been a principle both of the affections and of practical obedience. But here the parallel ceases; the Object of religious veneration being unseen, and dissimilar from all that is seen, reason can but represent it in the medium of those ideas which the experience of life affords, (as we see in the Scripture account, as far as it is addressed to the intellect;) and unless these ideas, however inadequate, be correctly applied, they re-act upon the affections, and deprave the religious principle. This is exemplified in the case of the heathen, who, trying to make their instinctive notion of the Deity an object of reflection, pictured to their minds false images, which eventually gave them a pattern and a sanction for sinning. Thus the systematic doctrine of the Trinity may be considered as the shadow, projected for the contemplation of the intellect, of the Object of scripturally-informed piety: a representation, economical; necessarily imperfect, as being exhibited in a foreign medium, and therefore involving apparent inconsistencies or mysteries; given to the Church by tradition contemporaneously with those apostolic writings, which are addressed more directly to the heart, kept in the back-ground in the infancy of Christianity, when

faith and obedience were vigorous, and brought forward at a time when, reason being disproportionally developed, and aiming at sovereignty in the province of religion, its presence became necessary to expel an usurping idol from the house of God.

In order to restrain it from spontaneous aberrations.

If this account of the connexion between the theological system and the Scripture implication of it, be substantially correct, it will be seen how ineffectual all attempts ever will be to obscure the doctrine in mere general language. It is readily granted that the intellectual representation should ever be subordinate to the cultivation of the religious affections. And after all, it must be owned, so reluctant is a well-constituted mind to reflect on its own feelings, that the correct intellectual image, from its hardness of outline, may startle and offend those who have all along acted upon it. Doubtless there are portions of the ecclesiastical doctrine, presently to be exhibited, which may at first sight seem a refinement, merely because the object and bearings of them are not understood without reflection and experience. But what is left to the Church but to speak out, in order to exclude error? Much as we may wish it, we cannot restrain the rovings of the intellect, or silence its clamorous demand for a formal statement concerning the Object of our worship. If, e. g. Scripture bids us adore God, and adore His Son, our reason at once asks, whether it does not follow that there are two Gods; and a system of doctrine becomes unavoidable; being framed, let it be observed, not with a view of explaining, but of arranging the inspired notices concerning the Supreme Being, of providing, not a consistent, but a connected statement. There the inquisitiveness of a pious mind rests, viz. when it has pursued the subject into the mystery which is its limit. But this is not all. The intellectual expression of theological truth not only excludes heresy, it directly assists the acts of religious worship and obedience; fixing and stimulating the Christian spirit in the same way that the knowledge of the one God relieves and illuminates the perplexed conscience of the religious heathen. And thus much on the importance of Creeds to tranquillize the mind; the text of Scripture being addressed principally to the affections, and though definite according to the criterion of practical influence, vague and incomplete in the judgment of the intellect.

The systematic doctrine required as a test of faith.

2. Nor, in the next place, is an assent to the text of Scripture sufficient for the purposes of Christian fellowship. As the sacred text was not intended to satisfy the intellect, neither was it given as a test of the religious temper which it forms, and of which it is an expression. Doubtless no combination of words will ascertain an unity of sentiment in those who adopt them; but one form is more adapted for the

purpose than another. Scripture being unsystematic, and its faith scattered through its documents, and understood only when they are viewed as a whole, the Creeds aim at concentrating its general spirit, so as to give security to the Church, as far as may be, that the subscriber takes the peculiar view of it which alone is the true one. But, if this be the case, how idle is it to suppose, that to demand assent to a form of words which happens to be scriptural, is therefore sufficient to effect an unanimity in faith and action! If the Church would be vigorous and influential, it must be decided and plain-spoken in its doctrine, and must regard its faith rather as a character of mind than as a notion. To attempt comprehensions of opinion, amiable as the motive frequently is, is to mistake arrangements of words, which have no existence except on paper, for habits which are realities; and ingenious generalizations of discordant sentiments for that practical agreement which alone can lead to co-operation. We may indeed artificially classify light and darkness under one term or formula; but nature has her own fixed courses, and unites mankind by the sympathy of moral character, not by those forced resemblances which the imagination singles out at pleasure in the most promiscuous collection of materials. However plausible may be the veil thus thrown over heterogeneous doctrines, the flimsy artifice is discomposed so soon as the principles beneath it are called upon to move and act. Nor are these attempted comprehensions innocent; for, it being the interest of our enemies to weaken the Church, they have always gained a point, when they have put upon us words for things, and persuaded us to fraternize with those who, differing from us in essentials, yet happen in the excursive range of opinion somewhere to intersect that path of faith, which centres in supreme and zealous devotion to the service of God.

The duty of imposing it.

Let it be granted, then, as indisputable, that there are no two opinions so contrary to each other, but some form of words may be found vague enough to comprehend them both. The Pantheist will admit that there is a God, and the Humanitarian that Christ is God, if they are suffered to say so without explanation. But if this be so, it becomes the duty, as well as the evident policy of the Church, to interrogate them, before admitting them to her fellowship. If the Church be the pillar and ground of the truth, and bound to contend for the preservation of the faith once delivered to it; if we are answerable as ministers of Christ for the formation of one, and one only, character in the heart of man; and if the Scriptures are given us, as a means indeed towards that end, but inadequate to the office of interpreting themselves, except to such as live under the same Divine Influence which inspired them, and which is expressly sent down upon us that we may interpret them,—

then, it is evidently our duty piously and cautiously to collect the sense of Scripture, and solemnly to promulgate it in such a form as is best suited, as far as it goes, to exclude the pride and unbelief of the world. It will be admitted that, to deny to individuals the use of terms not found in Scripture, as such, would be a superstition and an encroachment on their Christian liberty; and in like manner, doubtless, to forbid the authorities of the Church to require an acceptance of these, when necessary, from its members, is to interfere with the discharge of their peculiar duties, as appointed of the Holy Ghost to be overseers of the Lord's flock. And, though the discharge of this office is the most momentous and fearful that can come upon mortal man, and never to be undertaken except by the collective illumination of the Heads of the Church, yet, when innovations arise, they must discharge it to the best of their ability; and whether they succeed or fail, whether they have judged rightly or hastily of the necessity of their interposition, whether they devise their safeguard well or ill, draw the line of Church fellowship broadly or narrowly, countenance the profane reasoner, or cause the scrupulous to stumble,—to their Master they stand or fall, as in all other acts of duty, the obligation itself to protect the Faith remaining unquestionable.

Actual application of the principle.

This is an account of the abstract principle on which ecclesiastical confessions rest. In its practical adoption it has been softened in two important respects. First, the Creeds imposed have been compiled either from Apostolical traditions, or from primitive writings; so that in fact the Church has never been obliged literally to collect the sense of Scripture. Secondly, the test has been used, not as a condition of communion, but of authority. As learning is not necessary for a private Christian, so neither is the full knowledge of the theological system. The clergy, and others in station, must be questioned as to their doctrinal views: but for the mass of the laity, it is enough if they do not set up such counter-statements of their own, as imply that they have systematized, and that erroneously. In the Nicene Council, the test was but imposed on the Rulers of the Church. Lay communion was not denied to such as refused to take it, provided they introduced no novelties of their own; the anathemas or excommunications being directed solely against the Arian innovators.

SECTION II.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

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We will begin by laying out the matter of evidence for the Catholic Doctrine, as it is found in Scripture; i. e. assuming it to be there contained, let us trace out the form in which it has been communicated to us,—the disposition of the phenomena, which imply it, on the face of the revelation. And here be it observed, in reference to what has already been admitted concerning the obscurity of the inspired documents, that it is nothing to the purpose whether or not we should have been able to draw the following view of the doctrine from them, had it never been suggested to us in the Creeds. For it has been, (providentially,) so suggested to all of us; and the question is not, what we should have done, had we never had external assistance, but, taking things as we find them, whether, the clue of the meaning of Scripture being given, (as it ever has been given,) we may not deduce the doctrine thence, by as argumentative a process as that which enables us to verify the received theory of gravitation, which perhaps we could never have discovered for ourselves, though possessed of the data from which the inventor drew his conclusions. Indeed, this state of the case is analogous to that in which the evidence for natural religion is presented to us. It is very doubtful, whether the phenomena of the visible world would in themselves have brought us to a knowledge of the Creator; but the universal tradition of His existence has been from the beginning His own comment upon them, graciously preceding the study of the evidence. With this remark I address myself to an arduous undertaking.

Divine Attributes in Natural Religion.

First, let it be assumed as agreeable both to reason and revelation, that there are Attributes and Operations, or by whatever more suitable term we designate them, peculiar to the Deity; e. g. creative and preserving power, absolute prescience, moral sovereignty, and the like. These are ever included in our notion of the incommunicable nature of God; and, by a figure of speech, were there occasion for using it, might be called one with God, present, actively co-operating, and exerting their own distinguishing influence, in all His laws, providences, and acts. Thus, if He be eternal, or omnipresent, we consider His power, knowledge, and holiness, to be co-eternal and co-extensive with Him. Moreover, it would be an absurdity to form a comparison between these and God

Himself; to regard them as numerically distinct from Him; to investigate the particular mode of their existence in the Divine Mind; or to treat them as parts of God, inasmuch as they are all included in the idea of the one Indivisible Godhead. And, lastly, subtle and unmeaning questions might be raised about some of these, e. g. God's power: whether, i. e. it did or did not exist from eternity, on the ground, that bearing a relation to things created, it could not be said to have existence before the era of creation.[a]

How displayed in the Old Testament.

Next, it is to be remarked, that the Jewish Scriptures introduce to our notice certain peculiar Attributes or Manifestations, (as they would seem,) of the Deity, corresponding in some measure to those already mentioned as conveyed to us by natural religion, though of a more obscure character. Such is what is called "the Spirit of God;" a phrase which denotes sometimes the Divine energy, sometimes creative or preserving power, sometimes the assemblage of Divine gifts, moral and intellectual, vouchsafed to mankind; having in all cases a general connexion with the notion of the vivifying principle of nature. Such, again, is "the Wisdom of God," as introduced into the book of Proverbs; and such is the "Name," the "Word," the "Glory," of God.

Invested with an apparent personality.

Further, these peculiar Manifestations, (to give them a name,) are sometimes in the same elder Scriptures singularly invested with the properties of personality; and, although the expressions of the sacred text may in some places be interpreted figuratively, yet there are passages so strangely worded, as at first sight to be inconsistent with themselves, and such as would be ascribed, in an uninspired work, to forgetfulness or inaccuracy in the writer;—as, e. g. when what is first called the Glory of God, is subsequently spoken of as an intelligent Agent, often with the characteristics, or even the name of an Angel. On the other hand, it elsewhere occurs, that what is introduced as an Angel, is afterwards described as God Himself.

Revealed in the New Testament as Persons.

Now, when we pass on to the New Testament, we find these peculiar Manifestations of the Divine Essence concentrated and fixed in two, called the Word, and the Spirit. At the same time, the apparent Personality ascribed to Them in the Old Testament, is changed for a real Personality, so clearly and explicitly marked as to resist all critical experiments upon the language, all attempts at allegorical interpretation. Here too the Word is more frequently called the Son of God; and appears to possess such strict personal attributes, as to be able voluntarily to descend from heaven, and assume our nature without ceasing to be identically what He was before; so as

[a] Origen de Principiis i. 2. § 10.

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to speak of Himself, though a man, as one and the same with the Divine Word Who existed in the beginning. The Personality of the Spirit in some true and sufficient sense is as accurately revealed; and that the Son is not the Spirit, is also evident from the fixed relations which are described as separating Them from each other in the Divine Essence.

Gregory Nazianzen.

Reviewing this process of revelation, Gregory Nazianzen, somewhat after the manner of the foregoing account, remarks that as Almighty God has in the course of His dispensations changed the ritual of religion by successive abrogations, so He has changed its theology by continual additions till it has come to perfection. "Under the old dispensation," he proceeds, "the Father was openly revealed, and the Son but obscurely. When the New was given, the Son was manifested, but the Divinity of the Spirit, intimated only. Now (after Pentecost,) the Spirit dwells with us, affording us clearer evidence about Himself . . . Thus by gradual additions, and flights, as David says, from strength to strength, and from glory to glory, the radiance of the Trinity has been made to shine out on us, in proportion as our increasing strength of vision was able to bear it." [a]

Remarks suggested by the method of the Revelation in Scripture.

Now from this peculiar method in which the doctrine is unfolded to us in Scripture, we gain so much as this in our contemplation of it; viz. the absurdity, as well as the presumption, of inquiring minutely about the actual relations subsisting between God and His Son and Spirit, and drawing large inferences from what is told us of Them. Whether They are equal to Him or unequal, whether posterior to Him in existence or coeval, such enquiries, (though often they must be answered when once started,) are in their origin as idle as similar questions concerning the Almighty's relation to His attributes (which still we answer as far as we can, when asked;) for the Son and the Spirit are *one* with Him, the ideas of number and comparison being excluded. Yet this statement must be qualified *from the evidence of Scripture*, by two additional remarks. On the one hand, the Son and Spirit are represented to us as ministering to God, and therefore are personally subordinate to Him; and on the other hand, in spite of this *personal* inequality in the *οἰκονομία* of revelation, yet, the Son and Spirit, being partakers of the fulness of the Father, are equal to Him in *nature*, and in Their claims upon our faith and obedience, as is sufficiently proved by the form of baptism.

Mysteriousness of the Doctrine.

The mysteriousness of the doctrine evidently lies, in our inability to conceive a sense of the word *person*, such, as to be more than a mere character, yet, less than an individual intelligent being; our own notions, as gathered from our ex-

[a] Greg. Naz. Orat. 37, p. 608.

perience of human agents, leading us to consider *personality* as involving in its very notion the idea of an independent immaterial substance.

SECTION III.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

THIS being the general Scripture view, it follows to describe the Ecclesiastical Doctrine, chiefly in relation to the Son, as contained in the writings of the Fathers, especially the Ante-Nicene.[a]

Titles of the Son and the Word.

Scripture is express in declaring both the divinity of Him Who in due time became man for us, and also His personal distinction from God in His pre-existent state. This is sufficiently clear from the opening of St. John's Gospel, which states the mystery as distinctly as an ecclesiastical comment can propound it. On these two truths the whole doctrine turns, viz. that our Lord is one with, yet personally separate from God. Now there are two appellations given to Him in Scripture, enforcing respectively these two essentials of the true doctrine, imperfect and open to misconception in themselves, but qualifying and completing each other. The title of the *Son* marks His derivation and distinction from the Father, that of the *Word*, (i. e. Reason) denotes His inseparable inherence in the Divine Unity; and while the former taken by itself, might lead one to conceive of Him as a second being, and the latter as no real being at all, both together witness to the mystery, that He is at once *from*, and yet *in*, the Immaterial, Incomprehensible God. Whether or not these titles contain the proof of this statement, (which, it is presumed, they actually do,) at least, they will enable us to classify our ideas; and we have authority for so using them. "The Son," says Athanasius, "is the Word and Wisdom of the Father: from which titles we infer His *spiritual* and *indivisible* derivation from the Father, inasmuch as the word (or reason) of a man is no part of him, nor when exercised, implies any change in the immaterial principle; much less, therefore, is it so with the Word of God. On the other hand, the Father calls Him His Son, lest, from hearing only that He was the Word, we should fail

[a] The examples cited are principally borrowed from the elaborate catalogues furnished by Petavius, Bishop Bull, and Suicer, in his Thesaurus and his Comment on the Nicene Creed.

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to consider Him as *real*, whereas the title of Son, designates Him as an *existing* Word, and a *substantial* Wisdom."[a]

Availing ourselves of this division, let us first comment on the appellation of Son, and then on that of Word or Reason.

The Son

1. Nothing can be plainer to the attentive student of Scripture, than that our Lord is there called the Son of God, not only in respect of His human nature, but of His pre-existent state also. And if this be so, the very fact of the revelation of Him as such, implies that we are to gather something from it, and attach some ideas to our notion of Him, which otherwise we should not have attached; else would it not have been made. Taking then the word in its most vague sense, so as to admit as little risk as possible of forcing the analogy, we seem to gain the notion of derivation from God, and therefore, of the utter dissimilarity and distance existing between Him and all beings except God His Father, as if He partook of that unapproachable, incommunicable Divine Nature, Which is uncreate and imperishable.

The Only-begotten.

But Scripture does not leave us here: in order to fix us in this view, lest we should be perplexed with another notion of the analogy, derived from that adopted sonship, which is ascribed therein to created beings, it attaches a characteristic epithet to His name, as descriptive of the peculiar relation of Him Who bears it to the Father. It designates Him as the *only-begotten* Son of God, (μονογενής, ἴδιος,) a term evidently referring, where it occurs, to His heavenly nature, and thus becoming the inspired comment on the more general title. It is true that the γέννησις of our Lord is also applied to certain events in His mediatorial history: to His resurrection from the dead (cf. Ps. ii. 7. Acts xiii. 33. Heb. v. 5. Rev. i. 5. Rom. i. 4.); and, according to the Fathers,[b] to His original mission in the beginning of all things to create the world; and to His manifestation in the flesh. Still, granting this, the sense of the word μονογενὴς remains, defined by its context to relate to something higher than any event occurring in time, however great or beneficial to the human race.

Corroboration from Scripture.

Being taken then, as it needs must, to designate His original nature, it witnesses most forcibly and impressively to that which is peculiar in it, viz. its origination from God,

[a] Athan de Syn 41.

In the same way the Semi-Arian Basil (of Ancyra) speaking of such heretics as argued that the Son has no existence separate from the Father, because He is called the Word, says, "For this reason our predecessors, in order to signify that the Son has a reality, and is in being, and not a mere words which comes and goes, were obliged to call Him a substance . . . For a word has no real existence, and cannot be a Son of God, else were there many sons." Epiph Hær. lxxiii. 12

[b] Bull. Defens Fid. Nic. iii. 9. § 12

and such as to exclude all resemblance to any being but Him, Whom nothing created resembles. Thus, without irreverently and idly speculating upon the γέννησις in itself, but considering the doctrine as given us as a practical direction to our worship and obedience, we may accept it in token, that whatever the Father is, such is the Son.—There are some remarkable texts in Scripture corroborative of this view: e. g. that in John v. "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself . . . What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth . . . As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will . . . . that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father Which hath sent Him."

The Divine Generation.

This is the principle of interpretation acknowledged by the primitive Church. Its teachers warn us against resting in the word γέννησις; they urge us on to seize and use its practical meaning. "Speculate not upon the divine generation," says Gregory Nazianzen, "for it is not safe . . . . let the doctrine be honoured silently; it is a great thing for thee to know the fact; the mode, we cannot admit that even angels understand, much less thou."[a] Basil says, "Seek not what is inexplicable, for you will not find . . . . if you will not comply, but are obstinate, I shall deride you, or rather I weep at your daring . . . : believe what is revealed, seek not what is unrevealed."[b] Athanasius and Chrysostom repel the profane inquiry argumentatively. "Such speculators," the former says, "might as well investigate, where God is, and how He is God, and of what nature the Father is. But as such questions are irreverent and irreligious, so is it also unlawful to venture such thoughts about the generation of the Son of God." And Chrysostom; "I know that He begat the Son: the manner how, I am ignorant of. I know that the Holy Spirit is from Him; how from Him, I do not understand. I eat food; but how this is converted into my flesh and blood, I know not. We know not these things, which we see every day when we eat, yet we meddle with inquiries concerning the substance of God."[c]

Profitable inference from the Doctrine.

While they thus prohibited speculation, they boldly used the doctrine for the purposes for which it was given them in Scripture. Thus Justin Martyr speaks of Christ as the Son, "Who alone is literally called by that name:" and arguing with the heathen, he says, "Jesus might well deserve from

[a] Greg. Naz. Orat. xxxv. 29, 30.
[b] Petav. v. 6. § 2. [c] Petav. v. 6, § 2.

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His gifts to be called the Son of God, viewed as a mere man, i. e. in the sense in which all writers speak of God as the Father of divine and human natures. But bear with us, though, besides this common generation, we ascribe to Him, as the Word of God, a derivation from God in a peculiar way."[a] Eusebius of Cæsarea, unsatisfactory as he is as an authority, has nevertheless well expressed the general Catholic view in his attack upon Marcellus. "He who describes the Son as a creature," he says, "does not observe that he is giving Him only the name of Son, and denying the reality; for whatever comes of a created substance, cannot truly be the Son of God, more than other things which are made. But He Who is truly the Son, born from God, as from a Father, He may properly be called the only begotten and singularly beloved (μονογενὴς καὶ ἀγαπητός) of the Father, and therefore He is Himself God."[b] This last inference, that what is born of God, is God, of course implicitly appeals to, and is supported by, the numerous texts which expressly call the Son God, and ascribe to Him the divine attributes.[c]

Illustrations of the Doctrine.

The reverential spirit in which the Fathers held the doctrine of the γέννησις led them to the use of other forms of expression, partly taken from Scripture, partly not, with a view of signifying the fact of the Son's full participation in the divinity of Him Who is His Father, without dwelling on the mode of participation or origination, on which they dared not speculate.[d] Such were the images of the sun and its radiance, the fountain and the stream, the root and its shoots, a body and its exhalation, fire and the fire kindled from it; all which were used as emblems of the sacred mystery in those points in which it was declared in Scripture, viz. the Son's being from the Father, and as such partaker in His divine perfections. The first of these is found is Heb. i. where our Lord is called "the brightness of God's glory." These illustrations had a further use in their very variety, as reminding the Christian that he must not dwell on any one of them for its own sake. The following passage from Tertullian will show how they were applied in the inculcation of the sacred doctrine. "Even when a ray is shot forth from the sun, though it be but a part from the whole, yet the sun is in the ray, inasmuch as it is the

[a] Bull. Defens. ii 4. § 2. [b] Euseb. de Eccles. Theol. i. 9, 10.

[c] The following are additional specimens from primitive theology. Clement calls the Son "the *perfect* Word, born of the *perfect* Father." Tertullian, after quoting the text, "All that the Father hath are Mine," adds, "If so, why should not the Father's titles be His? Since then the God of the Mosaic Law is Almighty, and the Highest, and the God of Hosts, and the King of Israel, and Jehovah, see to it whether the Son also be not signified by these names, being in His own right the Almighty God, inasmuch as He is the Word of the Almighty God." Bull. Defens. ii. 6. § 3. 7. § 4.

[d] Vid Athan ad Serap. i. 20.

ray of the sun; nor is its substance separated, but, so to say, drawn out. In like manner there is Spirit from Spirit, and God from God. As when a light is kindled from another, the original light remains entire and undiminished, though you borrow from it many like itself; so That Which proceeds from God, is called at once God, and the Son of God, and the Two are One." [a]

Subordination of the Son to the Father.

So much is evidently deducible from what Scripture tells us concerning the γέννησις of the Son; that there is, (so to express it,) a continuation of the One Infinite Nature of God, a derived divinity, in the Person of our Lord; an inference supported by the force of the word μονογενής, and verified by the freedom and unsparingness with which the Apostles ascribe to Christ the high incommunicable titles of eternal perfection and glory. There is one other notion conveyed to us in the doctrine, which must be evident as soon as stated, little as may be the practical usefulness of dwelling upon it. The very name of Son, and the very idea of derivation, imply a certain subordination of the Son to the Father, so far forth as we view Him as distinct from the Father, or in His personality: and frequent testimony is borne to the correctness of this inference in Scripture, as in the descriptions of the Divine Angel in the Old Testament, revived in the closing revelations of the New (Rev. viii. 3.); and in such passages as that above cited from St. John's Gospel. (John v. 19—30.) This is a truth which every Christian feels, declares and acts upon; but from piety he would not allow himself to reflect on what he does, did not the attack of heresies oblige him. The direct answer of a true religious loyalty to any question about the subordination of the Son, is that such comparisons are irreverent, that the Son is *one* with the Father, and that unless he honours the Son in all the fulness of honour which he ascribes to the Father he is disobeying His express command. It may serve as a very faint illustration of the offence given him, to consider the manner in which he would receive any question concerning the love which he feels respectively for two intimate friends, or for a brother and sister, or for his parents: though here the impropriety of the inquiry, arises from the incommensurableness, not the coincidence, of the respective feelings. But false doctrine forces us to analyze our own notions, in order to exclude it. Arius argued that, since our Lord was a Son, therefore He was not God: and from that time we have been obliged to determine how much we grant and what we deny, lest, while praying without watching, we lose all. Accordingly, orthodox theology has since his time worn a different aspect; first, inasmuch as divines have measured what they said; secondly,

[a] Bull. Defens. ii 7. § 2.

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inasmuch as they have adduced the Ante-Nicene language, which by its authors was spoken from the heart, not only as real, but as intentional testimony in their favour. And thus those early teachers have been made appear technical, when in fact they have only been reduced to system; e. g. just as in literature what is composed freely, is afterwards subjected to the rulers of grammarians and critics. This must be taken as an apology for the formality of the two following pages, and the injustice done in them to the ancient writers brought in evidence.

Instances cited.

"The Catholic doctors," says Bishop Bull, "both before and after the Nicene Council, are unanimous in declaring that the Father is greater than the Son, even as to divinity; i. e. not in nature or any essential perfection, which is in the Father and not in the Son, but alone in what may be called authority, that is in point of origin, since the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son."[a] Justin, e. g., speaks of the Son as "worshipped in the second place after the unchangeable and everlasting Creator." Origen says that "the Son is not more powerful than the Father, but subordinate; according to His own words, 'The Father that sent Me, is greater than I.'" This text is cited in proof of the same doctrine by the Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers, Alexander, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Cyril, and others, of whom we may content ourselves with the words of Basil: "Since the origin of being, is derived to the Son from the Father, therefore is the Father greater, as being the cause and origin; as the Lord has said, 'My Father is greater than I;'" and in another place, "The Son is second in rank to the Father, since He is from Him; and in prerogatives, inasmuch as the Father is the origin and cause of His existence."[b]

Ministrative Office of Son and Spirit.

Accordingly, the primitive writers, with an unsuspicious

[a] Bull Defens. iv 2 § 1 Or, again, to take the opinion of Petavius, as commented on by Cudworth: "Petavius himself, expounding the Athanasian creed, writeth in this manner: 'The Father is in a right Catholic manner affirmed by most of the ancients, to be greater than the Son, and He is commonly said also, without reprehension, to be before Him in respect of original.' Whereupon he concludeth the true meaning of that Creed to be this, that no Person of the Trinity is greater or less than other in respect of the essence of the Godhead common to them all . . . . but that notwithstanding there may be some inequality in them, as they are Hic Deus et Hæc Persona. Wherefore when Athanasius, and the other orthodox Fathers, writing against Arius, do so frequently assert the equality of all the Three Persons, this is to be understood in way of opposition to Arius only, who made the Son to be unequal to the Father, as ἑτερούσιον . . . . one being God, and the other a creature; they affirming on the contrary, that He was equal to the Father, as ὁμοούσιος . . . that is, as God and not a creature." Cudw. Intell Syst. 4. § 36.

[b] Justin. Apol i 13. 60. Bull. Defens. iv. 2. § 6. § 9. Petav. ii. 2. § 2 &c.

yet reverend explicitness, take for granted the essentially ministrative character of the ὑπόστασις or Person of both Son and Spirit, compared with the Father's; still of course speaking of them as included in the Divine Unity, not as external to it. Thus Irenæus, clear and undeniable as is his orthodoxy, yet declares, that "The Father is ministered to in all things by His own Offspring and Likeness, the Son and Holy Ghost, the Word and Wisdom, of Whom all angels are servants and subjects."[a] In like manner, an ὑπηρεσία is commonly ascribed to the Son and Spirit, and a *præceptio*, βούλησις, and θέλημα to the Father, by Justin, Irenæus, Clement, Origen, and Methodius,[b] altogether in the spirit of the Post-Nicene authorities already cited: and without any risk of misleading the reader, as soon as the second and third Persons are understood to be internal to the Divine Mind, *connaturalia instrumenta*, obedient (at most) in no stronger sense, than when the human will is said to be directed and influenced by the reason. Gregory Nazianzen lays down the same doctrine with an explanation, in the following sentence: "It is plain," he says, "that those designs which the Father conceives, the Word fulfils; not as a servant, or not entering into them, but with full knowledge and a master's power, and, to speak more suitably, as if He were the Father."[c]

Defect of the image contained in the word *Son.*

The Scriptural and Catholic sense of the word *Son* has now been explained; on the other hand, it is easy to see what was the defect of the image, and consequent danger in the use of it. First, there was an appearance of materiality, the more suspiciously to be viewed because there were heresies at the time which denied or neglected the spiritual nature of Almighty God. Next, too marked a distinction seemed to be drawn between the Father and Son, tending to give a separate individuality to each, and so to introduce a kind of ditheism; and here too heresy and philosophy had prepared the way for the introduction of the error. The Valentinians and Manichees are chargeable with both misconceptions. The Eclectics, with the latter; being Emanatists, they seem to have considered the Son to be both individually distinct from the Father, and of an inferior nature.—Against these errors we have the following among other protests.[d]

[a] Petav. i 3 § 7. [b] Petav. ibid. et seqq.
[c] Bull. Defens. ii. 13. § 10.

[d] In like manner Justin, after saying that the Divine Power called the Word is born from the Father, adds, "but not by separation from Him (κατ' ἀποτομήν) as if the Father lost part of Himself, as corporeal substances are not the same before and after separation." "The Son of God," says Clement, "never relinquishes His place of watch, not parted or separated off, not passing from place to place, but always everywhere, illimitable, all intellect, the perfect radiance of the Father, all intelligence, all-seeing, all-hearing, all-knowing, searching the angelic spirits with His Spirit."

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Protest of the Fathers against it.

Tertullian says, "We declare that two are revealed as God in Scripture, two as Lord; but we explain ourselves, lest offence should be taken. They are not called two, in respect of their both being God, or Lord, but in respect of their being Father and Son; and this moreover, not from any division in their nature, but from mutual relation, the Son being considered by us as included in the individuality of the Father."[a] Origen also, commenting upon the word ἀπαύγασμα, in Heb. i. says, "Holy Scripture endeavours to give us notions of the truth, and to lead us to a refined perception of it, by introducing the illustration of breath (ἀτμίς, Wisd. vii. 25.) This material image has been selected, in order to our understanding even in a degree, how Christ, Who is Wisdom, issues, as though the Breath, from the perfection of God Himself. . . In like manner from the analogy of material objects, He is called a pure and perfect Emanation of the Almighty glory (ἀπόῤῥοια. Wisd. ibid.) Both these resemblances most clearly shew the fellowship of nature between the Son and Father. For an emanation seems to be ὁμοούσιος, i. e. one with that of which it is the emanation." And to guard still more strongly against any misconception of the real drift of the illustration, he cautions his readers against "those absurd fictions which give the notion of certain literal extensions in the Divine nature; as if they would distribute it into parts, and divide the Father, if they could; whereas to entertain even the light suspicion of this, is not only extremely impious, but foolish also, nay, not even intelligible at all, that an incorporeal nature should be capable of division."[b]

Doctrine of the Word

2. To meet this misconception to which the word *Son* gave rise, the ancient Fathers availed themselves of the other chief appellation given to our Lord in Scripture. The Logos or Sophia, the Word, Reason, or Wisdom of God, is only by St. John distinctly applied to Christ; but both before his time and by his contemporary Apostles it is used in that ambiguous sense, half literal, half evangelical, which, when it is once known to belong to our Lord, guides us to the right interpretation of the metaphor. E. g. when St. Paul declares that "the Word of God is alive and active, and keener than a two-edged sword, and so piercing as to separate soul and spirit, joints and nerves, and a judge of our thoughts and designs, and a witness of every creature," it is scarcely possible to decide whether the revealed law of God be spoken of, or the Eternal Son. On the whole it would appear that our Lord is called the Word or Wisdom of God in two respects; first, to denote His essential presence in the Father, in as full a sense as the attribute of wisdom is essential to Him; secondly,

[a] Bull Defens. ii. 4. § 3. 7. § 5. Petav. i. 4. § 1.
[b] Bull Defens. ii. 9, § 19

His mediatorship, as the Interpreter or Word between God and His creatures. No appellation, surely, could have been more appositely bestowed, in order to counteract the notions of materiality and distinct individuality, and beginning of existence, which the title of the Son was likely to introduce into the Catholic doctrine. Accordingly, after the words lately cited, Origen uses it, (or a metaphor like it,) for this very purpose. Having mentioned the absurd idea, which had prevailed, of parts or extensions in the Divine nature, he proceeds: "Rather, as will proceeds out of the mind, and neither tears the mind, nor is itself separated or divided from it, in some such manner must we conceive that the Father has begotten the Son, Who is His Image." Elsewhere he says, "It were impious and perilous, merely because our intellect is weak, to deprive God, as far as our words go, of His only-begotten co-eternal Word, viz. the *wisdom in which He was blessed*. (Prov. viii. 30.) We might as well conceive that He was not for ever blessed."[a] Hence it was usual to declare that to deny the eternity of our Lord was all one as saying that Almighty God was once ἄλογος, without intelligence: e. g. Athenagoras says, that the Son is "the first offspring of the Father; not as made, for God being Mind Eternal, had from the beginning reason (τὸν λόγον) in Himself, being eternally intellectual (λογικός); but that He is so, as issuing forth (προελθών) upon the chaotic mass as the Rule and the Agent of creation (ἰδέα καὶ ἐνέργεια.)"[b] The same interpretation of the sacred figure is continued after the Nicene Council; e. g. Basil says, "If Christ be the Power of God, and the Wisdom, and these be uncreate and co-eternal with God, (for He never was without wisdom and power,) then, Christ is uncreate and co-eternal with God."[c]

Defect in the figure.

But here again the metaphor was necessarily imperfect; and, if pursued, open to misconception. Its obvious tendency was to obliterate the notion of the Son's Personality, i.e. to introduce Sabellianism. Something resembling this was the error of Paulus of Samosata and Marcellus: who, from the fleeting and momentary character of a word spoken, inferred that the Divine Word was but the temporary manifestation of God's glory in the man Christ. And it was to counteract this tendency, i. e. to witness against it, that the Fathers speak of Him as the ἐνυπόστατος Λογός, the permanent, real, and living Word.

The ἐκ Θεοῦ and ἐν Θεῷ.

3. The above is a sketch of the primitive doctrine concerning Christ's divine nature, as contained in the two chief appellations which are ascribed to Him in Scripture. The

[a] Bull Defens. iii 3. § 1

[b] Bull Defens. iii 5 § 2.

[c] Petav vi 9 § 2.

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ideas they convey may be denoted by the symbols ἐκ θεοῦ, and ἐν θεῷ; as though He were so derived from the simple Unity of God as in no respect to be divided or extended from it, (to speak metaphorically,) but to inhere within His mysterious individuality. Of these two conditions of the doctrine, however, the divinity of Christ, and the unity of God, the latter was much more earnestly insisted on in the early times. The divinity of our Lord was, on the whole, too plain a truth to dispute; but in proportion as it was known to the heathen, it would seem to them to involve this consequence,—that, much as the Christians spoke against polytheism, yet, after all, they did admit a polytheism of their own instead of the Pagan. Hence the anxiety of the Apologists, while they assail the heathen creed on this account, to defend their own against a similar charge. Thus Athenagoras, in the passage lately referred to, says; "Let no one ridicule the notion that God has a Son. For we have not such thoughts either about God the Father or the Son as your poets, who, in their mythologies, make the gods no better than men. But the Son of God is the Word of the Father .... *the Father and the Son being one.* The Son being in the Father, and the Father in the Son, in the unity and power of the Spirit, the Son of God is the Mind and Word of the Father." Accordingly, the divinity of the Son being assumed, the early writers are earnest in protecting the doctrine of the Unity; protecting it both from the materialism of dividing the Godhead, and the paganism of separating the Son and Spirit from the Father. And to this purpose they made both the ἐκ θεοῦ and the ἐν θεῷ subservient, in a manner which shall now be shown.

The περιχώρησις.

First, the ἐν θεῷ.—It is the clear declaration of Scripture, which we must receive without questioning, that the Son and Spirit are in the one God, and He in Them. There is that remarkable text in John i. which says that the Son is "in the bosom of the Father." In another place it is said that "the Son is in the Father and the Father in the Son." (John xiv. 11.) And elsewhere the Spirit of God is compared to "the spirit of a man which is in him." (1 Cor. ii. 11.) This is, in the theological language, the doctrine of the περιχώρησις, or circumincessio; which was used from the earliest times on the authority of Scripture, as a safeguard and witness of the Divine Unity. A passage from Athenagoras to this purpose has just been cited. Clement has the following doxology at the end of his Christian Instructor. "To the only God, Who is Father and Son, Son and Father, Son our guide and teacher, with the Holy Spirit also, in all things One, in Whom are all things. . . . to Him be glory now and for ever." And Gregory of Neocæsarea declares, "In the Trinity there is

nothing created, nothing subservient, nothing of foreign nature, as if absent from it once, and afterwards added. The Son never failed the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but the Trinity remains evermore unchangeable, unalterable." These authorities belong to the early Alexandrian school. The Ante-Nicene school of Rome is still more explicit. Dionysius of Rome says, "We must neither distribute into three deities the awful and divine Unity, nor diminish the dignity and infinite majesty of our Lord by the notion of His being a creature, but we must put our trust in God the Father Almighty, and in Christ Jesus His Son, and in the Holy Spirit; and believe that the Word is ever one by nature with the Supreme God. For He says, I and the Father are One; and, I am in the Father, and the Father in Me. For thus the Divine Trinity and the holy doctrine of the Unity will be safe."[a]

The characteristic of Trinitarianism.

This doctrine of the *coinherence*, as protecting the Unity without intrenching on the perfections of the Son and Spirit, may even be called the characteristic of Catholic Trinitarianism as opposed to all counterfeits, whether philosophical, Arian, or Oriental. One Post-Nicene statement of it shall be added. "If any one truly receive the Son," says Basil, "he will find that He brings with Him on one hand His Father, on the other the Holy Spirit. For neither can He be severed from the Father, Who is ever of and in the Father; nor again disunited from His own Spirit, Who operates all things by means of It. . . . For we must not conceive separation or division in any way; as if either the Son could be supposed without the Father, or the Spirit disunited from the Son. But there is discovered between them some ineffable and incomprehensible, both union and distinction."[b]

The μοναρχία.

Secondly, as the ἐν θεῷ led the Fathers to the doctrine of the περιχώρησις, so did the ἐκ θεοῦ to that of the μοναρχία; still, with the one object of protesting against all appearance of Polytheism in their creed. Even the heathen had shown a disposition,

[a] Shortly before he had used the following stronger expressions. ἡνῶσθαι γὰρ ἀνάγκη τῷ Θεῷ τῶν ὅλων τὸν θεῖον Λόγον· ἐμφιλοχωρεῖν δὲ τῷ Θεῷ καὶ ἐνδιαιτᾶσθαι δεῖ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. The Ante-Nicene African school is as express as the Roman. Tertullian says, "Connexus Patris in Filio, et Filii in Paracleto, tres efficit cohærentes, qui tres unum sint, non unus." Bull. Defens. ii. 6 § 4 12 § 1. 11. § i. iv. 4. § 10.

[b] Petav. iv. 16. § 9. The Semi-arian creed, called μακρόστιχος, drawn up at Antioch A. D. 345, which is in parts unexceptionable in point of orthodoxy, contains the following striking exposition of the Catholic notion of the περιχώρησις. "Though we affirm the Son to have a distinct existence and life as the Father has, yet we do not therefore separate Him from the Father, inventing place and distance between Their union after a corporeal manner. For we believe that they are united without medium or interval, and are inseparable." And then follow words to which our language is unequal: ὅλου μὲν τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐνστερνισαμένου τὸν Υἱόν· ὅλου δὲ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐξηρτημένου καὶ προσπεφυκότος τῷ Πατρί, καὶ μόνου τοῖς πατρῴοις κόλποις ἀναπαυομένου διηνεκῶς. Bull Defens iv 4 § 9.

designedly or from a spontaneous feeling, to trace all their deities up to one Principle or ἀρχή; as is evident by their Theogonies.[a] Much more did it become that true religion, which prominently put forth the Unity of God, jealously to guard its language, lest it should seem to admit the existence of a variety of original Principles. It is said to have been the doctrine of the Marcionists and Manichees, that there were three unconnected independent Beings in the Divine nature. Scripture and the Church avoid the appearance of tritheism, by tracing back, (if we may so say,) the infinite perfections of the Son and Spirit to Him Whose Son and Spirit They are.—They are, so to express it, but the new manifestation and repetition of the Father; there being no room for numeration or comparison between Them, nor any resting-place for the contemplating mind, till They are referred to Him in Whom They centre. On the other hand, in naming the Father, we imply the Son and Spirit, whether They be named or not.[b] Without this key, the language of Scripture is perplexed in the extreme. Let 1 John v. 20. be taken as an example; or again, 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. John xiv. 16—18. xvi. 7—15. Hence it is, that the Father is called "the only God," at a time when our Lord's name is also mentioned, John xvii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 16, 17. as if the Son was but the reiteration of His Person Who is in heaven, and therefore not to be contrasted to Him in the way of number. The Creed, called the Apostles', follows this mode of stating the doctrine; the title of God standing in the opening against the Father's name, while the Son and Spirit are introduced as developments, (so to say,) of and in the one Eternal Principle. The Nicene Creed, commonly so called, directed as it is against the impugners both of the Son's and of the Spirit's divinity, nevertheless observes the same rule even in a stricter form, beginning with a confession of the "*one* God." Whether or not this mode of speaking was designed in Scripture to guard the doctrine of the Unity from all verbal infringement, (and there seems evidence that it was so, e. g. 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6,) it certainly was used for this purpose in the primitive Church. Thus Tertullian says, that it is a mistake "to suppose that the number and arrangement of the Trinity is a division of its Unity; inasmuch as the Unity drawing out the Trinity from itself, is not destroyed by it, but is subserved."[c] Novatian, in like manner, says, "God originating from God, so as to be the Second Person, yet not interfering with the Father's right to be called the one God.

[a] Cudw. Intell. Syst. 4. § 13. [b] Athan. ad Serap. i. 14.

[c] Again he says, that "the Trinity descending from the Father by closely knit and connected steps, both is consistent with the monarchia (Unity), and preserves the economia (Trinity)."

For, had He not been derived, then indeed when compared with Him Who is underived, He would seem, from the appearance of equality in both, to make two underived, and therefore two Gods." [a]

Accordingly it is impossible to worship One of the Divine Persons, without worshipping the Others also. In praying to the Father, we only arrive at His mysterious presence through His Son and Spirit; and in praying to the Son and Spirit, we are necessarily carried on beyond them to the source of Godhead from which They are derived. We see this in the very form of many of the received addresses to the Blessed Trinity; in which, without intended reference to the mediatorial scheme, the Son and Spirit seem, even in the view of the Divine Unity, to take a place in our thoughts between the Father and His creatures; as in the ordinary doxologies "to the Father through the Son and by the Spirit," or "to the Father and Son in the unity of the Holy Ghost."

Expressions resulting from the doctrine

This gives us an insight into the force of expressions, common with the primitive Fathers, but bearing, in the eyes of inconsiderate observers, a refined and curious character. They call the Son, "God of God, Light of Light," &c. much more frequently than simply God, in order to anticipate in the very form of words, the charge or the risk of ditheism. Hence, also, the illustrations of the sun and his rays, &c. were in such repute; viz. as containing, not only a description, but also a defence of the Catholic doctrine. Thus Hippolytus says, "When I say that the Son is distinct from the Father, I do not speak of two Gods; but, as it were, light of light, and the stream from the fountain, and a ray from the sun." [b] It was the same reason which led the Fathers to insist upon the doctrine of the *γέννησις*.

[a] Petav. Præf. 5. § 1 iii. 1. § 8 Dionysius of Alexandria implies the same doctrine, when he declares; "We extend the indivisible Unity into the Trinity, and again we concentrate the indestructible Trinity into the Unity." And Hilary, to take a Post-Nicene authority, "We do not detract from the Father, His being the one God, when we say also that the Son is God. For there is God from God, one from one; therefore one God, because God from Himself On the other hand, the Son is not on that account the less God, because the Father is the one God. For the only-begotten Son of God is not underived, so as to detract from the Father His being the one God, nor for any other reason God, but because He is born of God" Vide also Athan. de Sent. Dionys. 17. Bull Defens. iv. 4. § 7.

[b] Bull Defens. iv 4 § 5

SECTION IV.

VARIATIONS IN THE ANTE-NICENE THEOLOGICAL STATEMENTS.

Observation on the foregoing Section.

THERE will, of course, be differences of opinion, in deciding how much of the ecclesiastical doctrine, as above described, was derived from direct Apostolical Tradition, and how much was the result of intuitive spiritual perception in scripturally-informed and deeply religious minds. Yet it does not seem too much to affirm, that copious as it may be in theological terms, yet hardly one can be pointed out which is not found or strictly implied in the New Testament itself. And indeed so much perhaps will be granted by all who have claim to be considered Trinitarians; the objections, which some among them may be disposed to raise, lying rather against its alleged over-exactness in systematizing Scripture, than against the truths themselves which are contained in it. But it should be remembered, that it is we in after times who systematize the statements of the Fathers, which, as they occur in their works, are for the most part as natural and unpremeditated as those of the inspired volume itself. If the more exact terms and phrases of any writer be brought together, i. e. a writer who has fixed principles at all, of course they will appear technical and severe. We count the words of the Fathers, and measure their sentences; and so convert doxologies into creeds. That we do so, that the Church has done so more or less from the Nicene Council downwards, is the fault of those who have obliged us, those who, "while men slept," have "sowed tares among the wheat."

Variations in early theological language.

This remark applies to the statements brought together in the last section, from the early writers: which, even though generally subservient to certain important ends, as e. g. the maintenance of the Unity of God, &c. are still on the whole written freely and devotionally. But now the discussion passes on to that more intentional systematizing on the part of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, which, unavoidable as it was, yet because it was in a measure conventional, was ambiguous, and in consequence afforded an apparent countenance to the Arian heresy. It often becomes necessary to settle the phraseology of divinity, in points, where the chief problem is, to select the clearest words to express notions in which all agree; or to find the proposition which will best fit in with, and connect, a number of received doctrines. E. g. the Calvinists dispute among themselves whether or not God *wills* the damnation of the non-elect; both parties agree in doctrine, they doubt how

their own meaning may be best expressed.[a] However clearly we see, and firmly we grasp the truth, we have a natural fear of the appearance of inconsistency; nay, a becoming fear of misleading others by our inaccuracy of language; and especially when our words have been misinterpreted by opponents, are we anxious to guard against such an inconvenience in future. There are two characteristics of opinions subjected to this intellectual scrutiny: first, they are *variously* expressed during the process; secondly, they are expressed *technically*, at the end of it. Now, to exemplify this in certain Ante-Nicene statements of the great Catholic doctrine.

The ἀγέννητον.

1. The word ἀγέννητον, was the philosophical term to denote that which had existed from eternity. It had accordingly been applied by Aristotle to the world or to matter, which was according to his system without beginning; and by Plato to his ideas. Now since the Divine Word was according to Scripture γεννητός, He could not be called ἀγέννητος (*everlasting*,) without a verbal contradiction. In process of time a distinction was made between ἀγένητος and ἀγέννητος, (*uncreate* and *unbegotten*;) so that the Son might be said to be ἀγενήτως γεννητός. The argument, arising from this perplexity of language, is urged by Arius himself; who ridicules the ἀγεννητογενής, which he conceives must be ascribed, according to the orthodox creed, to the Son of God.[b] Some years afterwards, the same was the palmary, or rather the essential argument of Eunomius, the champion of the Anomœans.

The ἄναρχον.

2. The ἄναρχον, (the *uncaused* or *unoriginate*.) According to the doctrine of the μοναρχία, as already explained, the Father alone is the ἀρχή, and the Son and Spirit are not ἀρχαί. The heresy of the Tritheists, made it necessary to insist upon this. Hence the condemnation, in the (so called) Apostolical Canons, of those who baptized εἰς τρεῖς ἀνάρχους, "in the name of Three unoriginate."[c] And Athanasius, (e. g.) says, "We do not teach three Principles, (ἀρχαί,) as our illustration shows; for we do not speak of three Suns, but of the Sun and its radiance."[d] For the same reason the early writers spoke of the Father as the πηγὴ Θεότητος. At the same time, lest they should in word dishonour the Son, they ascribed to Him ἄναρχος γέννησις.[e] Thus Alexander, the first champion of orthodox truth against Arius, in his letter to his namesake of Byzantium: "We must reserve to the unbegotten Father His peculiar prerogative, confessing that His existence is from none, and to the Son we must pay the due honour, attributing to Him τὴν ἄναρχον γέννησιν; and, as we have said already, paying Him worship, so as ever to speak of Him piously and reverently as 'pre-existent, ever-

[a] Vid. another instance infra ch. v. § 2

[b] Vid. infra § 5

[c] Bull, Defens. iv. i § 6.

[d] Cudw. Intell Syst 4 § 36.

[e] Suicer. Symb. Nicen. c. viii.

living,' and 'before the worlds.'" This distinction however, as might be expected, was but partially received among the Catholics. Contrasted with all created beings, the Son and Spirit are of necessity unoriginate, or ἄναρχοι in the Unity of the Father. Clement, e. g. applies the following forcible expressions to the Son; he calls Him, τὴν ἄχρονον, ἄναρχον, ἀρχήν τε καὶ ἀπαρχὴν τῶν πάντων; ("the everlasting, unoriginate, origin and type of all things.") It was not till they became alive to the seeming ditheism of such phrases, which the Sabellian controversy was sure to charge upon them, that they learned the accurate discrimination observed by Alexander. On the other hand, when the Arian contest urged them in the contrary direction to Sabellius, then they returned more or less to the original language of Clement, though with a fuller explanation of their own meaning. Gregory Nyssen, gives the following plain account of the variations of their practice: "Whereas the word ἀρχὴ has many significations . . . . sometimes we say that the appellation of the uncaused (ἄναρχος,) is not unsuitable to the Son. For when it is taken to mean derivation of existence from no *origin*, (μὴ ἐξ αἰτίου τινός,) this indeed we ascribe to the Father alone. But according to the other senses of the word, since creation, time, the order of the world are referred to a cause (ἀρχὴ,) in respect of these we ascribe to the only-begotten, superiority to any cause; so as to believe Him to be beyond creation, time, and system, through Whom were made all things. And thus we confess Him, Who is not unoriginate (μὴ ἄναρχον,) in regard to His Person (τῆς ὑποστάσεως,) in all other respects to be unoriginate, i. e. uncaused, (ἔχειν τὸ ἄναρχον;) and, while the Father is unoriginated and unbegotten, the Son to be unoriginated in the sense explained, yet not unbegotten."[a]

The αἴτιος.

The word αἴτιος used in this passage, as a substitute for that use of ἀρχὴ which peculiarly applies to the Father as the πηγὴ θεότητος, is found as early as the time of Justin Martyr, who in his dialogue with Trypho, declares the Father is to the Son the αἴτιος τοῦ εἶναι: and it was resumed by the Post-Nicene writers, when the Arian controversy was found to turn in no small degree on the exact application of such terms. Gregory Nazianzen, e. g. says, "We shall keep to the doctrine of one God, if we do but refer the Son and Spirit to *one origin* εἰς ἓν αἴτιον."[b]

[a] Gregory Nazianzen says the same more concisely: ὁ Υἱός, ἐὰν ὡς αἴτιον τὸν Πατέρα λαμβάνῃς, οὐκ ἄναρχος· ἀρχὴ γὰρ Υἱοῦ Πατὴρ, ὡς αἴτιος. Bull, Defens. iv. 2. § 8. 1 § 3. Petav. i 4. § i. Suicer. ibid.

[b] However, here too we have a variation in the use of the word; αἴτιος being sometimes applied to the Son in the sense of ἀρχή. The Latin word answering to it is sometimes *causa*, more commonly *principium* or *auctor*. Bull, Defens iv i. § 2. § 4 Petav. v 5 § 10

3. The Ante-Nicene history of the word ὁμοούσιον, which the Council of Nicæa adopted as its test, will introduce a more important discussion.

The οὐσία.

It is a peculiarity of revelation, that it clears up all doubts as to the existence of God, as separate from, and independent of nature; and shows us that the course of the world depends not merely on a system, but on a Being, real, living, and individual. What we ourselves witness, evidences to us the operation of laws, physical and moral: but it leaves uncertain, whether or not the principle of these be a mere nature or fate, whether the life of all things be a mere anima mundi, a spirit connatural with the body in which it acts, or an Agent powerful to make or unmake, to change or supersede, according to His will. It is here that revelation supplies the deficiency of philosophical religion; miracles are its emblem, as well as its credentials, forcing on the imagination the existence of an irresponsible self-dependent Being, as well as recommending a particular message to the reason. This great truth, conveyed in the very circumstances under which revelation was given, is explicitly recognised in its doctrine. Among other modes of inculcating it, may be named the appellation under which Almighty God disclosed Himself to the Israelites; Jehovah, (or as the Septuagint translate it, ὁ ὢν) being an expressive appellation of Him, Who is essentially separate from those variable and perishable substances, which creation presents to our observation. Accordingly, the description of the Supreme Being as τὸ ὄν, or in other words, the doctrine of the οὐσία of God, became familiar to the minds of the primitive Christians; as embodying the spirit of the Scriptures, and indirectly witnessing against the characteristic error of pagan philosophy, which considered the Divine Mind, not as a reality, but as a mere abstract name, or generalised law of nature, or at best as a mere mode, principle, or an animating soul, not a Being external to creation, and possessed of individuality. Cyril of Alexandria defines οὐσία to be πρᾶγμα αὐθύπαρκτον, μὴ δεόμενον ἑτέρου πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σύστασιν,[a] "that which has existence in itself, independent of every thing else to fix its reality;" i. e. an individual being. This sense of the word must be carefully borne in mind, since it was *not* the sense given to it by the philosophers; among whom it stood for the genus or species, not the individual, i. e. not the unum numero, (as logicians speak,) but the ens unum in multis; which latter sense of course it could not bear when applied to the One Unapproachable God. The word, thus appropriated to the service of the God of revelation, was from the earliest date used to give reality and subsistence to the Son; and no word could be less

[a] Suicer Thesaur. verb. οὐσία.

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metaphorical and more precise for this purpose, although the Platonists chose to refine, and from an affectation of reverence called God ὑπερούσιος.[a] Justin Martyr, e. g. speaks of heretics, who considered that God put forth and withdrew His Logos when it pleased Him, as if He were an influence, not a Person,[b] somewhat in the sense afterwards adopted by Paulus of Samosata and others. To meet this error, he speaks of Him as inseparable from the οὐσία of the Father; i. e. in order to exclude all such evasions of Scripture, as might represent the man Christ as inhabited by a divine glory, power, nature, and the like: and which in reality lead to the conclusion that He is not God at all.

The ὁμοούσιον.

For this purpose the word ὁμοούσιον was brought into use among Christian writers; viz. to express the real divinity of Christ, and that, as derived from, and one with the Father's. Here again, as in the instance of its root, the word was adopted from the necessity of the case, in a sense different from the ordinary philosophical use of it. Ὁμοούσιος properly means *of the same nature*, i. e. under the same *general* nature, or species; i. e. is applied to things, which are but similar to each other, and are considered as one by an abstraction of our minds. Thus Aristotle speaks of the stars being ὁμοούσια with each other; and Porphyry, of the souls of brute animals being ὁμοούσιαι to ours.[c] When, however, it was used in relation to the incommunicable Essence of God, there was obviously no abstraction possible in contemplating Him, Who is above all comparison with His works. His nature is solitary, peculiar to Himself, and one; so that whatever was accounted to be ὁμοούσιος with Him, was necessarily included in His individuality, by all who would avoid recurring to the vagueness of philosophy, and were cautious to distinguish between the incommunicable Essence of Jehovah and all created intelligences. And hence the fitness of the term to denote without metaphor the relation which the Logos bore in the orthodox creed to His eternal Father. Its use is explained by Athanasius as follows. "Though," he says, "we cannot understand what is meant by the οὐσία of God, yet we know as much as this, that God exists (εἶναι,) which is the way in which Scripture speaks of Him; and after this pattern, when we wish to designate Him distinctly, we say God, Father, Lord. When then He says in Scripture, 'I am ὁ ὤν,' and 'I am Jehovah, God,' or uses the plain word 'God,' we understand by such statements nothing but His incomprehensible οὐσία, and that He, Who is there spoken of, exists (ἐστίν.) Let no one then think it strange, that the Son of God should be said to be ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Θεοῦ, of the substance of God; rather, let him agree to the explanation

[a] Petav. iv 5 § 8. [b] Justin. Tryph. 128.
[c] Bull. Defens. ii 1. § 2, &c.

of the Nicene fathers, who, for the words ἐκ Θεοῦ substituted the ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας. They considered the two phrases substantially the same, because, as I have said, the word God denotes nothing but the οὐσία αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὄντος. On the other hand, if the Word be not in such sense ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, as to be the true Son of the Father according to His nature, but be said to be ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, merely as all creatures are such as being His work, then indeed He is not ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρός, nor Son κατ' οὐσίαν, but so called from His virtue, as we may be, who receive the title from grace."[a]

History of its use.

The term ὁμοούσιος is first employed for this purpose by the author of the Ποιμάνδρης, a Christian of the beginning of the second century. Next it occurs in several writers in the end of the second and the beginning of the third. In Tertullian, the equivalent phrase, unius substantiæ, is applied to the Trinity. In Origen's comment on the Hebrews, the ὁμοούσιον of the Son is deduced from the figurative title ἀπαύγασμα, there given Him. In the same age, it was employed by various writers, bishops and historians, as we learn from the testimonies of Eusebius and Athanasius. But at this era, a change took place in the use of it and other similar words, which is next to be explained.

Its reception in the Oriental theology.

The oriental doctrine of Emanations was at a very early period combined with the Christian theology. According to the system of Valentinus, a Gnostic heresiarch, who flourished in the early part of the second century, the Supreme Intelligence of the world gave existence to a line of Spirits or Eons; who were all more or less partakers of His nature, i. e. of a nature *specifically* the same, and included in His glory (πλήρωμα,) though individually separate from the true and sovereign Deity. It is obvious, that such a doctrine as this abandons the great revealed principle above described, the incommunicable character and individuality of the Divine Essence. It considers all spiritual beings as like God, in the same sense that one man resembles or has the same nature as another: and accordingly it was at liberty to apply, and did actually apply, to the Creator and His creatures the word ὁμοούσιον, in the philosophical sense which the word originally bore. We have evidence in the work of Irenæus that the Valentinians did thus employ it. The Manichees followed, about a century later; they too were Emanatists, and spoke of the human soul as being ὁμοούσιον τῷ Θεῷ, of one substance with God. Their principles evidently allowed of a kind of Trinitarianism; the Son and Spirit being considered Eons of a superior order to the rest, ὁμοούσια with God because Eons, but one with God in no sense which was not true also of the soul of man.

[a] Athan de Decr Nic. 22

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It is said, moreover, that they were materialists; and used the word ὁμοούσιον in the still grosser meaning in which it may be applied to different vessels or instruments, wrought out from some one mass of metal or wood. However, whether this was so or not, it is plain that any how the word in question would become unsuitable to express the Catholic doctrine, in proportion as the ears of Christians were familiarized to the terms employed in the Gnostic and Manichean theologies.

The προβολὴ.

The history of the word προβολὴ is parallel to that of the ὁμοούσιον.[a] It properly means any thing which proceeds, or is sent forth from the substance of another, as the fruit of a tree, or the rays of the sun; in Latin it is translated by *prolatio, emissio,* or *editio,* or what is now expressed by the word *development.* Accordingly Justin employed it, or rather the cognate phrase προβληθὲν γέννημα, to designate what Cyril calls above the αὐθύπαρκτον, the reality of existence, of the Son, in opposition to the evasions in the system of Samosatenus, Sabellius, and the rest. Tertullian does the same; but by that time, Valentinus had given it a material signification. Hence Tertullian is obliged to apologize for using it, when writing against Praxeas, the forerunner of the Sabellians. "Can the Word of God," he asks, "be unsubstantial, Who is called the Son, Who is even called God? He is said to be in the *form* of God. Is not God a substance, Spirit though He be? . . . . His substantial Word then, I call a Person, and the Son, and being such, He comes next to the Father. Let no one suppose that I am bringing in the notion of any such προβολὴ as Valentinus imagined, drawing out his Eons the one from the other. Why must I give up the word in a right sense, because heresy uses it in a wrong? besides, heresy borrowed it from us, and has turned truth into a lie. . . . This is the difference between the uses of it. Valentinus separates his probolæ from their Father; they know Him not. But we hold that the Son alone knows the Father, reveals Him, performs His will; in one sense, is a Spirit within Him. He is ever in the Father, as He has said; ever with God, as it is written; never separated from Him, for He and the Father are one. This is the true probole, sent forth not divided off."[b] Soon after Tertullian thus defended his use of the word προβολὴ, Origen in another part of the Church gave it up, or rather assailed it, in argument with Candidus, a Valentinian. "The Father," he says, "though individual and simple, yet becomes the Father of the Son, not by development, (προβάλλων) as some suppose; for if so, (προβολὴ) both Father and Son were of a material nature."[c] Here we see two writers, with

[a] Beausobre Hist. Manich. iii. 7. § 6.
[b] Tertull in Prax. § 8.
[c] Beausobre, ibid.

exactly the same theological creed before them, taking opposite views as to the propriety of using a word which heresy had corrupted.

History of the ὁμοούσιον.

Though Origen gave up the word προβολή, yet he used the word ὁμοούσιος, as has already been mentioned. But shortly after his death, his pupils abandoned it at the celebrated Council held at Antioch, (A. D. 264) against Paulus of Samosata. When they would have used it as a test, this heretic craftily objected to it on the very ground on which Origen had surrendered the προβολή. He urged that, if Father and Son were of one substance, ὁμοούσιοι, there was some common οὐσία in which they partook, and which consequently was distinct from and prior to the Divine Persons Themselves; a wretched sophism, which of course could not deceive Firmilian and Gregory, but which, being adapted to perplex weak minds, might decide them on withdrawing the word. It is remarkable too, that the Council was held about the time when Manes appeared on the borders of the Antiochene Patriarchate. The disputative school of Paulus pursued the advantage thus gained; and from that time used the charge of materialism as a weapon for attacking all sound expositions of Scripture truth. Having extorted from the Catholics the condemnation of a word long known in the Church, almost found in Scripture, and less figurative and material in its meaning than any which could be selected, and objectionable only as used by heretics, they employed this concession as a ground of attacking expressions more directly metaphorical, taken from visible objects, and sanctioned by less weighty authority. In a letter which shall afterwards be cited, Arius charges the Catholics with teaching the errors of Valentinus and Manes; and in another of the original Arian documents, Eusebius of Nicomedia, maintains in like manner that their doctrine involves the materiality of the Divine Nature. Thus they were gradually silencing the Church by a process which legitimately led to Pantheism, when the Alexandrians gave the alarm, and nobly stood forward in defence of the faith.

The Alexandrians retain it.

It is worth observing that, when the Asiatic Churches had given up the ὁμοούσιον, they, on the contrary, had preserved it. Not only Dionysius willingly accepts the challenge of his namesake of Rome, who reminded him of the value of the symbol; but Theognostus also, who presided at the Catechetical School at the end of the third century, recognizes it by implication in the following passage, which has been preserved by Athanasius. "The substance (οὐσία) of the Son," he says, "is not external to the Father, or created; but it is by natural derivation from that of the Father, as the radiance comes from light (Heb. i. 3.). For as the radiance is not the sun, and yet not foreign to it, so is there an effluence, (ἀπόῤῥοια, Wisd. vii. 25.) from the Father's substance (οὐσία,) though it be indivisible. For as the

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sun remains the same without infringement of its nature, though it pour forth its radiance, so the Father's substance is unchangeable, though the Son be its Image."[a]

The θελήσει γεννηθέν.

4. Some notice of the θελήσει γεννηθὲν, or voluntary generation, will suitably follow the discussion of the ὁμοούσιον; though the subject does not closely concern the Church. It has been already observed that the tendency of the heresies of the first age was towards materialism and fatalism. As it was the object of revelation to destroy all theories which interfered with the notion of the Divine Omniscience and active Sovereignty, so the Church seconded this design by receiving and promulgating the doctrine of the ὁ ὤν, or οὐσία of God, as a symbol of His essential distinction from the perishable world in which He acts. But when the οὐσία itself was taken by the Gnostics and Manichees in a material sense, the error was again introduced by the very term which was intended to witness against it. According to the Oriental Theory, the emanations from the Deity were eternal with Himself, and were considered as the result, not of His will and moral energy, but of the necessary laws to which He was subjected; a doctrine which was but fatalism in another shape. The Eclectics honourably distinguished themselves in withstanding this blasphemous, or rather atheistical tenet. Plotinus declares, that "God's substance and His will are the same; and if so, as He willed, so He is, so that it is not more certain that, as His substance or nature, so is His will and providence, than, as His will and providence, so is His substance." Origen had preceded them in their opposition to the same school. Speaking of the simplicity and perfection of the Divine Essence, he says, "God does not even participate in substance, (οὐσίας) rather He is partaken; by those, namely, who have His Spirit. And our Saviour does not share in holiness, but, being holiness itself, is shared by the holy." The meaning of this doctrine is clear; —to protest, in the manner of Athanasius, in a passage lately cited, against the notion that the οὐσία of God is something distinct from God Himself, the one immaterial, intelligent, all-perfect Spirit; but the risk of it lay in its tendency to destroy the doctrine of His individual and real existence, (which the Catholic use of οὐσία symbolized,) and to introduce in its stead the notion of a quality or mode of acting, as the governing principle of nature; in other words, Pantheism. This is an error of which Origen of course cannot be accused; but it is in its measure chargeable on the Platonic mysteries, and is countenanced even by their mode of speaking of the Supreme Being, as not an οὐσία but ὑπερούσιος, above the notion of substance.[b]

[a] Athan. de Decr. Nic. 25.

[b] Cudw. Intell Syst. iv § 23. Petav vi. 8 § 19. ibid. vol i. ii 6. § 9.

The controversy did not rest even on the sacred ground which has been described, but was pursued by the heretical party into the peculiar subject of Christian theology. The Manichees considered the Son and Spirit as necessary Emanations from the Father; erring, first in their classing those Divine Persons with intelligences confessedly imperfect and subservient, next in introducing a sort of materialism into their notion of the Deity. The Eclectics on the other hand maintained, by a strong figure, that the eternal Son originated from the Father at His own will; meaning thereby, that the everlasting mystery which constitutes the relation between Father and Son, has no physical or material conditions, and is such as becomes Him Who is altogether Intellect, and bound by no laws but those established by His own perfection as a first cause. Iamblichus, e. g. calls the Son αὐτογόνος, self-begotten.

Introduced into the doctrine of the Trinity.

The discussion seems hardly to have entered further into the Ante-Nicene Church than is implied in the above notice of it: though some suppose that Justin and others referred the divine γέννησις to the will of God. However, it is easy to see that the ground was prepared for the introduction of a subtle and impious question, whenever the theologizing Sophists should choose to raise it. Accordingly, it was one of the first and principal interrogations put to the Catholics by their Arian opponents, whether the γέννησις of the Son was voluntary or not on the part of the Father; their inference being, that Almighty God were subject to laws external to Himself, if it were not voluntary; and that, if it were voluntary, the Son was in the number of things created. But of this, more in its place.

Perversion of it

5. The Λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and προφορικός. One theory there was, adopted by several of the early Fathers, which led them to speak of the Son's γέννησις as resulting from the Father's will, and yet did not interfere with His ὁμοουσίον. Of the two titles ascribed in Scripture to our Lord, that of the Logos expresses with peculiar force, His co-eternity in the One Almighty Father. On the other hand, the word *Son* has more reference to His derivation and ministrative office. A distinction resembling this had already been applied by the Stoics to the Platonic Logos, which they represented under two aspects, the ἐνδιάθετος and the προφορικός, i. e. the internal thought and purpose of God and its external manifestation, as if in words spoken. The terms were received into the Church; the ἐνδιάθετος standing for the Word, as hid from everlasting in the bosom of the Father, while the προφορικός was the Son sent forth into the world, in apparent separation from God, with His Father's name and attributes upon Him, and His Father's will to perform.[a] This contrast is acknowledged by Athanasius, Gregory

The λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and προφορικός

[a] Burton Bamp Lect note 91 Petav vi 1 3

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Nyssen, Cyril, and other Post-Nicene writers; nor can it be censured, being scriptural in its doctrine, and merely expressed in philosophical language, found ready for the purpose. But further, this change of state in the Eternal Word, from repose to energetic manifestation, as it took place at the creation, was called by them a γέννησις; and here too, no blame attaches to them, for the expression is used in Scripture in different senses, one of which appears to be the very signification which they put on it, the mission of the Word to make and govern all things, as may be argued from Gen. i. 3. Col. i. 15. Heb. xi. 3. Rev. iii. 14. Ecclus xxiv. 3—9. This γέννησις was also called the προέλευσις, or συγκατάβασις, of the Son, which may scripturally be ascribed to the θέλησις, the will of the All-bountiful Father.[a] However, there are some early writers who seem to interpret the γέννησις in this meaning exclusively, the title of *Son* being ascribed to our Lord after the date of His mission or economy, and that of the Logos being His peculiar appellation during the previous eternity. Nay, if we carry off their expressions hastily or perversely, as some theologians have done, we shall perhaps conclude that they dared to conceive that God existed in one Person before the προέλευσις, and then, (if it may be said,) by a change of nature He began to exist in a second; as if an attribute (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος) had become a real person, (προφορικός). The Fathers, who have laid themselves open to this charge, are Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus, Hippolytus, and Novatian, as mentioned in the first chapter.

Innocently used by the five Fathers

Now, that they did not mean what a superficial reader might lay to their charge, may be argued first, from the parallel language of the Post-Nicenes, lately enumerated, whose orthodoxy no one questions. Next from the extreme absurdity, not to speak of the impiety, of the doctrine imputed to them; as if, with a more than Gnostic extravagance, they should conceive that any change or extension could take place in that Individual Essence Which is without parts or passions, or that the divine γέννησις could be an *event* in time, instead of being considered a mere expression of the eternal *relation* of the Father towards the Son. Indeed the very absurdity of the literal sense of their words, in whatever degree they so expressed themselves, was the mischief to be apprehended from them. The reader, trying a rhetorical description by too rigid a rule, would attempt to elicit sense by imputing a heresy; and would conclude, that they meant by the προφορικὸς λόγος a created being, made at the beginning of all things as the visible emblem of the ἐνδιάθετος, to be the instrument of God's purposes towards His creation. This is in fact the Arian doctrine, which doubtless availed itself in its defence, of these declarations of in-

[a] Bull, Defens. iii. 9

cautious piety; or rather we have evidence of the fact that it did so in the letter of Arius to Alexander, and from the anathema of the Nicene creed directed against such as said that the Son πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν.

Theophilus.

Lastly, the orthodoxy of the five writers in question, is ascertained by a careful examination of the passages from which the accusation has been brought against them. By way of illustration one or two of these shall here be added. E. g. Theophilus says; "God having His own Logos within Him, begat Him together with His Wisdom, (i. e. His Spirit,) putting them forth before the world. ἔχων. . . ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Λόγον ἐνδιάθετον ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις σπλάγχνοις, ἐγέννησεν αὐτὸν μετὰ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ σοφίας ἐξερευξάμενος (Psalm xlv. 1.) πρὸ τῶν ὅλων. He had this Logos as the Minister of His works, and did all things through Him. . . The prophets were not in existence when the world was made; but the Wisdom of God, Which is in Him, and His holy Logos, Who is ever present with Him. ὁ ἀεὶ συμπαρὼν αὐτῷ . . ." Elsewhere he speaks of, "the Logos, eternally seated in the heart of God;" τὸν Λόγον διαπαντὸς ἐνδιάθετον ἐν καρδίᾳ Θεοῦ. For, he presently adds, "before any thing was made, He possessed this Counsellor, as being His mind and providence. And when God purposed to make all that He had deliberated on, He begat this Logos and put it forth, ἐγέννησε προφορικόν, being the first born antecedent to the whole creation; not however Himself losing the Logos (reason,) but begetting it, and yet everlastingly communing with it."

Hippolytus.

The following passage is from the work of Hippolytus against Noetus. "God was alone, and there was no being coeval with Him, when He willed to create the world . . . Not that He was destitute of reason, (λόγος,) wisdom, or counsel. They were all in Him, He was all. At the time and in the manner He willed, He manifested His Word . . through Whom He made all things . . . Moreover He placed over them His Word, Whom He begat as His Counsellor and Instrument; Whom He had within Him, invisible to creation, till He manifested Him, uttering the word, and begetting Light from Light . . . and so another stood by Him; not as if there were two Gods, but as though light from light, or a ray from the Sun."[a]

And thus we close our survey of the Catholic Ante-Nicene theology.

[a] Bull. Defens. iii 7, 5

SECTION V.

THE ARIAN HERESY.

Arius first introduced the heresy into the Church

IT remains to give some account of the heretical doctrine, which was first promulgated within the Church by Arius. There have been attempts to impute this heresy to Catholic writers previous to his time ; yet its contemporaries are express in their testimony that he was the author of it, nor can any thing be adduced from the Ante-Nicene theology to countenance the desired hypothesis. Sozomen expressly says, that Arius was the first to introduce into the Church the doctrine of the ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων. and the ἦν ποτε ὅτι οὐκ ἦν, the creation and non-eternity of the Son of God. Alexander and Athanasius, who had the amplest means of information on the subject, confirm his testimony.[a] That the heresy existed before the time of Arius outside the Church, may be true ; though little is known on the subject. Although the heresiarch does not venture to adduce in his favour, the evidence of former Catholics, he and his supporters nevertheless speak in a general way of having received their doctrines from others. Arius too, appears to be but a partizan of the Eusebians, and they in turn are referrible to an excommunicated body, the Lucianists of Antioch. But here we lose sight of the heresy ; except that Origen assails a doctrine, whose we know not, which bears a resemblance to it ; nay, if we may trust Ruffinus, which has adopted the very same heterodox formula which Sozomen declares that Arius was the first to preach within the Church.

Before detailing, however, in what his heresy consisted, it may be right briefly to confront it with such previous doctrines, in or out of the Church, as may be considered to bear a resemblance to it.

Arianism

The fundamental tenet of Arianism was, that the Son of God was a creature, or in the scientific language of the times, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, of a substance that once was not ; hence the Arians were called, οἱ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, or the Exucontii. It followed, that He only possessed a super-angelic nature, being made at God's good pleasure before the worlds, after the pattern of the attribute Logos or Wisdom, existing in the Divine Mind, gifted with the illumination of it, and in consequence called after it ; the instrument of creation and revelation ; and at length united to a human body, in the place of its soul, in the person of Jesus Christ.

Contrasted with the doctrine of

1. This doctrine resembled that of the five philosophizing Fathers, described in the last section, so far as this ; that it

[a] Soz i 15 Theod Hist i 4 Athan de Decr. Nic 27. de sent Dionys 6.

identified the Son with the Λόγος προφορικός, spoke of the real Logos as if merely an attribute, and yet affected to maintain a connexion between the Logos and the Son. It differed from it, inasmuch as they believed, that He Who was the Son had ever been in personal existence as the Logos in the Father's bosom; whereas it dated His personal existence from the time of His manifestation.

the five Fathers.

2. It resembled the Eclectic theology, so far as to maintain the Son was by nature inferior to the Father; and, again, formed by the Father's will. It differed from it, in considering the Son to have a beginning of existence, whereas the Platonists held Him to be an eternal emanation, and the Father's will to be a concomitant, not an antecedent of His γέννησις.

With Eclecticism.

3. It agreed with Gnostics and Manichees, in maintaining the Son's essential inferiority to the Father. It vehemently opposed them, in their material notions of the Deity.

With the Oriental Theology.

4. It agreed with the Paulianists, in considering the Intelligent Principle in Christ to be a mere creature, by nature subject to a moral probation, as other men, and exalted on the ground of His obedience; and gifted, moreover, with a heavenly wisdom called the Logos, which guided Him. The two heresies also agreed, as the last words imply, in considering the Logos an attribute or manifestation, not a Person. Paulus considered it as if a voice or sound, which comes and goes; so that God may be said to have *spoken* in Christ. Arius makes use of the same illustration. "Πολλοὺς λόγους λαλεῖ ὁ Θεός," he says, "which of them is manifested in the flesh?" [a] He differs from Paulus, in holding the pre-existence of the spiritual intelligence in Christ, which he considers to be the first and only created by the Father, and the instrument of all subsequent creation, and other divine operations.

With Paulianism.

5. Arianism agreed with the heresy of Sabellius, in considering God to exist only in one Person, and His Logos to be but an attribute, manifested in the Son, Who was a creature.[b] It differed from it, as regards the sense in which it believed the Logos to be in Christ. The Sabellian, lately a Patripassian, at least insisted much upon the *abiding* presence of the Logos in Him. The Arian, but partially admitting the influence of the real Logos on His pre-existing soul, transferred the *name* to that soul itself, and maintained that the incarnate Logos was not the true Wisdom of God, which was one with Him, but a created semblance of it.

With Sabellianism.

Such is Arianism in its relations to the principal errors of its time; and of these it was most opposed to the Valentinian and Sabellian, which, as we shall see, it did not scruple to impute to its Catholic adversaries. Towards the Catholics, on the other

With orthodoxy.

[a] Athan de Decr Nic 16 [b] Athan de Sent Dionys. 25.

hand, it stood thus:—it was willing to ascribe to the Son all that is commonly attributed to Almighty God, His name, authority, and power; all but the incommunicable nature, or οὐσία; i. e. all but that which alone could give Him a right to these titles of honour in a real and literal sense:—Now, to turn to the arguments, by which the heresy defended itself, or rather attacked the Church.

Argument of Arius from the word *Son*, as implying a beginning.

Arius commenced his heresy thus, as Socrates informs us. "(1) If the Father begat the Son, He Who was begotten has a beginning of existence (ἀρχὴν ὑπάρξεως); (2) therefore once the Son did not exist (ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν); (3) therefore He is formed from what once was not (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἔχει τὴν ὑπόστασιν.")[a] It appears, then, that he inferred his doctrine from the very meaning of the word *Son*, which is the scriptural designation of our Lord; and so far he adopted a fair and unexceptionable mode of reasoning. Human relations, though the merest shadows of "heavenly things," yet would not of course be employed by Divine Wisdom without fitness, nor unless with the intention of instructing us. But what should be the exact instruction derived by us from the word *Son* is another question. The Catholics, (not to speak of their guidance from tradition in determining it,) had taken it in its most obvious meaning; as interpreted moreover by the word μονογενής, and as confirmed by the general tenor of revelation. But the Arians selected as the sense of the figure that part of the original import of the word, which, though undeniably included in it when referred to us, is at best what logicians call a proprium, deduced from the essence, not a part of the essence, and was peculiarly out of place, when the word was used to express a sacred doctrine. That a *Father* is prior to his *Son*, is not suggested, though it be implied by the force of the terms, as ordinarily used; and it is an inference altogether irrelevant, when the inquiry has reference to that Being, from the notion of Whom time as well as space is necessarily excluded. It is fair, indeed, to object at the outset to the word Father being applied at all in its primary sense to the Supreme Being; but this was not the Arian ground, which was to argue from, not against, the metaphor employed. Nor

[a] Socr. i. 5. The argument thus stated in the history, answers to the series of propositions anathematized at Nicæa, which are as follows; the prefixed figures marking the correspondence of each with those set down by Socrates. τοὺς λέγοντας (2) ὅτι ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, (1) καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν, (3) καὶ ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο, ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας εἶναι, ἢ κτιστὸν, (4) ἢ τρεπτὸν ἢ ἀλλοιωτὸν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ἁγία καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία. The last proposition here condemned, viz. the mutability of the Son of God, which has no counterpart in the account given by Socrates, probably was not one of Arius's original propositions, but forced from him by his opponents as a necessary consequence of his doctrine. He retracts it in his letter to Alexander, who on the other hand bears public testimony to his having declared it. But of this more in its place.

was even this the extent of perverseness which their argument evidences. Let it be observed, that they admitted the primary sense of the word, *in order* to introduce a mere secondary sense; contending, that because our Lord was to be considered really as a Son, therefore in fact He was no Son at all. In the first proposition Arius assumes that He is really a Son, and argues as if He were; in the third, he has arrived at the conclusion that He is created, i. e. no Son at all, except in a secondary sense, as having received from the Father a sort of *adoption*. An attempt was made by the Arians to smooth over their inconsistency, by bringing passages from Scripture, in which the works of God are spoken of as births; as in the instance from Job, "He giveth birth to the drops of dew." But this is obviously an entirely new mode of defending the theory of *adoption*, and does not relieve their original offence; which consisted in their arguing from an assumed analogy, which the result of their own argument destroyed. For, if He be the Son of God no otherwise than we are, i. e. by adoption, what becomes of the argument from the *anterior* and *posterior* in existence? as if the notion of adoption contained in it any necessary reference to the nature and circumstances of the two parties between whom it takes place.

Argument from the θέλησις of the Father.

Accordingly, the Arians were soon obliged to betake themselves to a more refined argument. They dropped the mention of time, and withdrew the inference concerning it which they had drawn from the literal sense of the word Son. Instead of this, they maintained that the relation of Father and Son, as such, in whatever sense employed, could not but imply the notion of voluntary originator, and on the other hand, of a free gift conferred; or that the Son must be essentially inferior to Him, from Whose θέλησις, or will, His existence resulted. Their argument was conveyed in the form of a dilemma: "utrum volens an nolens Pater genuerit Filium?" The Catholics wisely answered them by a counter-inquiry, which was adapted to silence, without indulging the presumptuous disputant. Gregory of Nazianzen asked them, whether the Father is God, "volens an nolens," willingly or unwillingly; and Cyril of Alexandria, "whether God is good, compassionate, merciful, and holy, with or against His choice? For if He is so in consequence of choosing it, and choice ever precedes what is chosen, ἦν χρόνος ὅτε οὐχ ἦν ταῦτα Θεός, these attributes once did not exist." —Athanasius gives substantially the same answer, solving, however, rather than confuting, the objection. "The Arians," he says, "direct their view to the *contrary* to willing, instead of considering what is the *prior* and *more fundamental*. For as *unwillingness* is opposed to willing, so *nature* is that which it depends on and follows.[a]

[a] Petav. ii. 5. § 9. vi 8.

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Argument from the ἀγέννητον

Further:—the Arians attempted to draw their conclusion of the dissimilarity of the Father and Son from the ἀγέννητον, which was acknowledged on all sides to be the peculiar attribute of the Father, while it had been the philosophical as well as Valentinian appellation of the supreme God. This was the chief resource of the Anomœans, who revived the pure Arian heresy, some years after the death of its first author. Their argument has been expressed in the following form; that "the essence of the Father is ἀγέννητον, that of the Son γεννητὸν; but ἀγέννητον and γεννητὸν cannot be the same."[a] The shallowness, as well as the miserable trifling of such disputations on a serious subject, renders them unworthy a refutation.

Argument from the materiality of the word Son literally taken

Moreover, they argued against the Catholic sense of the word *Son*, from what they conceived to be its *materiality;* and unwarrantably contrasting its *primary* with its *figurative* signification, as if both could not be preserved, they contended that, since the word must be figurative, that therefore it could not retain its primary sense, i. e. must be taken in the secondary sense of *adoption*.

Inferences from these arguments

The reasonings of the Arians, so to call them, had now conducted them thus far; to maintain that our Lord was a creature, advanced, after creation, to be a son of God. They did not shrink from the inference which these positions implied, viz. that he was tried as other moral agents, and adopted on being found worthy; that his holiness was not essential, but acquired.

Evasions of the Arians

It was next incumbent on them to explain in what sense our Lord was the μονογενής, since they refused to understand that word according to the Catholic comment of the ὁμοούσιον. Accordingly, they pronounced the γέννησις to be a kind of creation, and then they at once proceeded to hide the offensiveness of this dogma by the variety and dignity of the titles, by which they distinguished the Son from other creatures. They declared that He was, strictly speaking, the *only* creature of God, as alone made immediately by Him; and hence called μονογενὴς, as γεννηθεὶς μόνος ἐκ μόνου;[b] whereas all others were created through Him, as the instrument of Divine Power; and that in consequence, He was κτίσμα, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἓν τῶν κτισμάτων· γέννημα, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἓν τῶν γεγεννημένων; or, to express it with something of the ambiguity of the Greek, that He was not a creature like other creatures. Another ambiguity of expression followed. The idea of time depending on that of creation, they were able to grant, that He, Who was employed in forming the worlds, therefore existed before all time, πρὸ χρόνων καὶ αἰώνων, not granting thereby that He was from everlasting, but that He was brought into existence, ἀχρόνως, independent of that succession

[a] Beausobre, Hist Manich. iii 7 § 2.
[b] Pearson on the Creed, vol ii. p. 148 Suicer. Thesaur verb. μονογενής

of second causes, (as they are called,) that elementary system seemingly self-sustained, and self-renovating, to the laws of which creation itself may be considered as subjected.

Pretended concessions

Nor, lastly, had they any difficulty either in allowing or explaining away the other attributes of Divinity ascribed to Christ in Scripture. They might safely confess Him to be perfect God, one with God, adorable, the author of good; still with the reserve, that sacred appellations belonged to Him only in the same general sense in which they are sometimes accidentally bestowed on the faithful servants of God, and without interfering with the prerogatives of the one eternal, self-existing Cause of all things.[a]

Documents of the controversy

This account of the Arian system may suitably be illustrated by some of the original documents of the controversy. Here, then, shall follow two letters of Arius himself, an extract from his Thalia, a letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and parts of the circular epistles of Alexander of Alexandria, in justification of his excommunicating Arius and his followers [b]

Letter from Arius to Eusebius

1. "To his most esteemed superior, Eusebius, a man of God, faithful and orthodox, Arius, unjustly persecuted by Alexander for the all-conquering truth's sake, of which thou too art a champion, sends health in the Lord! As Ammonius, my father, was going to Nicomedia, it seemed becoming to address thee through him; and withal to urge upon that deep-seated affection which thou bearest towards the brethren for the sake of God and His Christ, how fiercely the bishop besets and pursues us, leaving no means untried in his opposition. At length he has driven us out of the city [Alexandria] as impious men, (ἀθέους,) merely for dissenting from his public declarations, that 'as God is eternal, so is His Son;—when the Father, then the Son;—the Son is present in God without a birth (ἀγεννήτως,) ever-begotten (ἀειγενής,) an unbegotten-begotten (ἀγεννητογενής;—neither in thought, nor by an instant of time, is God anterior to the Son;—an eternal God, an eternal Son;—the Son is from God Himself (ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ) Since, then, Eusebius, thy brother of Cæsarea, Theodotus, Paulinus, &c . . . say that the unoriginated God exists before the Son, they are (thus) become excommunicate by Alexander's sentence; all but Philogonius, Hellanicus, and Macarius, heretical, ill-grounded men, who say that He is the offspring or issue without birth (οἱ μὲν ἐρυγὴν, οἱ δὲ προβολὴν ἀγέννητον). These blasphemies we cannot bear to hear even, no, not if the heretics should threaten

[a] It may be added, that the chief texts which they adduced in controversy were Prov. viii 22. Matt. xix 17, xx. 23 Mark xiii 32 John v 19, xiv. 28. 1 Cor. xv. 28 Col i 15 and others which refer to our Lord's mediatorial office (Petav ii. Theod Hist i 4) But it is obvious, that the strength of their cause did not lie in their knowledge of Scripture

[b] Theod. Hist. i 4—6. Socr i 6 Athan in Arian i 5 de Syn 15, 16 Epiph. Hær. lxix. 6, 7. Hilar Trin iv 12 vi 5

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us with ten thousand deaths. What, on the other hand, are our statements and opinions, our past and present teaching? that the Son is not unoriginate (ἀγέννητος); nor any how a part of the Unoriginate (μέρος ἀγεννήτου); nor made of any previously existing substance (ἐξ ὑποκειμένου τινός); but that, by the will and purpose of God, He was in being before time (πρὸ χρόνων καὶ πρὸ αἰώνων) perfect God, the only-begotten (πλήρης Θεός, μονογενής), unchangeable; and that before this generation, or creation, or appointment or constitution, [these words are selected by Arius as being found in Scripture,] He was not (πρὶν γεννηθῇ, ἤτοι . . . κ. τ. λ. . . οὐκ ἦν), inasmuch as He did not exist without birth (ἀγέννητος). And we are persecuted for saying, The Son has an origin (i. e. beginning, ἀρχήν), but God is unoriginate (ἄναρχος); for this, we are under persecution, and for saying, that He is of a substance that once was not (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων), inasmuch as He is not part of God (μέρος Θεοῦ), nor of any previously existing substance. Therefore we are persecuted; the rest thou knowest. Be strong in the Lord, remembering our affliction, fellow-Lucianist, truly named Eusebius [the pious]."

Letter from Arius to Alexander

2. The second letter is written in the name of himself and his partizans of the Alexandrian Church; who, finding themselves excommunicated, had withdrawn to Asia, where they gained leave to propagate their opinions. It was composed under the direction of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and is far more temperate and cautious than the former. "To Alexander, our blessed Father and Bishop, the Priests and Deacons send health in the Lord. Our hereditary faith, which thou too, blessed Father, hast taught us, is this. We believe in one God, alone without birth, alone everlasting, alone unoriginate, alone truly God, alone immortal, alone wise, alone good, alone sovereign, alone judge of all, ordainer and dispenser, unchangeable, and unalterable, just and good, of the Law and the Prophets, and of the New Testament. We believe that this God gave birth to the only-begotten Son before eternal periods (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων), through Whom He hath made those periods themselves (αἰῶνας), and all things else;—that He gave birth to Him, not in semblance but in truth, giving Him a real existence (ὑποστήσαντα) at His own will, so as to be unchangeable and unalterable, God's perfect creature, but not as other creatures (οὐχ ὡς ἓν τῶν κτισμάτων), His making (offspring) but not as if made (γέννημα, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἓν τῶν γεγεννημένων); not as Valentinus maintained, a development (προβολήν), nor again as Manichæus, a consubstantial part (μέρος ὁμοούσιον), nor as Sabellius, Son and Father at once (υἱοπάτορα εἰπεῖν), which is to make two out of one, nor as Hieracas, [the Manichee,] a light from light, or torch divided in two; nor, as if He was previously in being and afterwards begotten, (i. e. created again to be a

Son,) a notion condemned by thyself, blessed Father, in full Church and among the assembled clergy; but, as we affirm, created by the will of God before times and before periods, and having life and existence from the Father, Who at the same time gave Him to share His own glorious perfections (τὰς δόξας συνυποστήσαντας αὐτῷ). For, when the Father gave to Him the inheritance of all things, He did not thereby deprive Himself of attributes which are His without origination (ἀγεννήτως), being the source (πηγή) of all things.

"So there are three persons (ὑποστάσεις); and whereas God is the cause (αἴτιον) of all things, and therefore unoriginate, and altogether separate from all, the Son on the other hand, begotten by the Father time-apart (ἀχρόνως γεννηθείς), and created and set forth before all periods, did not exist before He was begotten, but being begotten by the Father time-apart, was brought into being (ὑπέστη), the one production of the one Father. For He is not eternal, or co-eternal, or co-unbegotten with the Father; nor hath an existence collateral with the Father (ἅμα τῷ Πατρὶ τὸ εἶναι ἔχει), as if there were two unbegotten principles (ἀρχάς); but God is before all things, as being individual (μονάς) and the principle of all;—and therefore before Christ also; as indeed we have learned from thee, in thy public preaching. Inasmuch then as He hath His being (τὸ εἶναι) from God, and His glorious perfections, and His life, and is intrusted with all things, for this reason God has sovereignty over Him (ἀρχὴ αὐτοῦ), as being His God and before Him. As to such phrases as 'from Him' (ἐξ αὐτοῦ), and 'from the womb,' (Ps. cx. 3.) and 'issued forth from the Father, and am come.' (John xvi. 28.) if they be understood, as they are by some, to denote a part of one and the same substance (μέρος τοῦ ὁμοουσίου), and a development (προβολή), then the Father will be of a compound nature (σύνθετος), and divisible, and changeable, and corporeal; and thus, as far as their words go, the incorporeal God will be subjected to the properties of matter. I pray for thy health in the Lord, blessed Father."

Arius's Thalia.

3. About the same time Arius wrote his Thalia, or song for banquets and merry-makings, from which the following is extracted. He begins thus: "According to the faith of God's elect, who know God, holy children, sound in their creed, gifted with the Holy Spirit of God, I have received these things from the partakers of wisdom, accomplished, taught of God, and altogether wise. Along their track I have pursued my course with like opinions, I the famous among men, the much-sufferer for God's glory; and, taught of God, I have gained wisdom and knowledge." After this exordium, he proceeds to declare, "that God made the Son the origin or beginning of creation (ἀρχήν), being Himself unoriginate, and adopted

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Him to be His Son; Who on the other hand has no character of divinity in His own Person (ἴδιον οὐδὲν τοῦ Θεοῦ καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἰδιότητος), not being equal, nor consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος) with Him; that God is invisible, not only to the creatures created through the Son, but to the Son Himself; that there is a Trinity, but not with an equal glory; the Persons being separate from each other (ἀνεπίμικτοι), One infinitely more glorious than the Other [this is in opposition to the περιχώρησις]; that the Father is different in substance from the Son (ξένος κατ' οὐσίαν), as existing unoriginate; that by God's will the Son became Wisdom, Power, the Spirit, the Truth, the Word, the Glory, and the Image of God; that the Father, as being Almighty, is able to give existence to a Being equal to the Son, though not superior to Him; that from the time He was made, being a mighty God. He has celebrated (ὑμνεῖ) the Greater; that He cannot investigate (ἐξιχνιάσαι) His Father's nature, it being plain that the originated cannot comprehend the Unoriginate; nay, that He does not know His own, nor understand any thing with that true knowledge which God possesses."

Letter from Eusebius to Paulinus.

4. On the receipt of the letter from Arius, which was the first document here exhibited, Eusebius of Nicomedia, addressed a letter to Paulinus of Tyre, of which the following is an extract. "We have neither heard of two unoriginate principles (ἀγέννητα), nor of one divided into two, subjected to any material process; but of one Unoriginate (ἀγέννητον), and one originated (γεγονὸς) by Him really; not from His substance (οὐσίας), but altogether foreign to the nature of the Unoriginate, totally different (ἕτερον) in nature and in power, though made after the perfect likeness of the character and excellence of His Maker. . . . But if He was of Him in the sense of 'from Him,' as if a part of Him, or of the effluence of His substance (ἐξ ἀποῤῥοίας τῆς οὐσίας), He would not be spoken of (in Scripture) as created, or set forth; . . . for what exists as belonging to the Unoriginate (ἐκ τοῦ ἀγεννήτου ὑπάρχον), cannot be considered as created or set forth, whether by another or by the Unoriginate Himself, as being from the first of a nature which had no beginning . . . Nothing is of His substance; but all things are made at His will."

Letters of Alexander.

5. Alexander, in his public accusation of Arius and his party, writes thus. "They say that there was a time when the Son of God was not (ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν), and that He Who before had no existence was at length made, such as any other man is by nature. Numbering the Son of God among created things, they are but consistent in adding that He is of an alterable nature, capable of virtue and vice. . . . When it is urged on them that the Saviour differs from others called sons of God, by the unchangeableness of His nature, throwing off

all reverence, they say, that God, foreknowing and foreseeing His obedience, chose Him out of all creatures; chose Him, I say, not as if possessing aught by nature and right above the others, (since, as they say, there is no Son of God by nature,) nor bearing any peculiar relation towards God; but as being of an alterable nature, preserved from falling by the pursuit and exercise of virtuous conduct, so that if Paul or Peter had made such strenuous progress, they would have gained a sonship equal to His." In another letter, which was a circular addressed to the Christian Churches, he says, "It is their doctrine that 'God was not always a Father, that the Word of God has not always existed, but was made of created substance (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων); for the ever-existing God made Him Who once was not, out of a substance which once was not (ὁ ὢν Θεὸς τὸν μὴ ὄντα ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος πεποίηκε.) . . . He is neither like the Father in substance (ὅμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν), nor is He the true and innate Logos of the Father, nor His true Wisdom; but one of His works and creatures; and by a strong figure (καταχρηστικῶς) the Word and Wisdom, inasmuch as He Himself was made by the real Logos of God, and that wisdom which is in God, by which God made all things, and Him in the number. Hence He is foreign and external to the Divine substance (οὐσίας), being separated off from it. He was made for our sakes, in order that God might create us by Him as by an instrument, and He would not have had being, had not God willed our making. Some one asked them if the Word of God could fall as the devil fell? they scrupled not to answer, 'Certainly He can.'"

More than enough has now been said in explanation of a controversy, the very sound of which will ever be painful to a Christian mind. Yet so it has been ordered, that He Who was once lifted up to the gaze of the world, and hid not His face from the shame of derision and contumely, has again been subjected to rude and impious scrutiny in the promulgation of His religion to the world. And His true followers have been themselves obliged to raise and fix their eyes on Him, as if He were one of themselves, dismissing the reverence which would keep them ever at His feet. The subject may be dismissed with the following remarks.

Unscriptural character of the Arian arguments

1. First, it is obvious to notice the *unscriptural character* of the arguments on which the heresy was founded. It is true that the Arians did not neglect to support their case from such detached portions of the inspired volume, as suited their purpose; but still it never can be said that they showed that earnest desire of sacred truth, and careful search into its documents, which alone marks the Christian inquirer. The question is not merely whether they confine themselves to the language of Scripture, but whether they began with the study

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of it. Doubtless to forbid in controversy the use of all words but those which actually occur in Scripture, is a superstition an encroachment on Christian liberty, and an impediment to freedom of thought; and especially unreasonable, considering that a traditionary system of theology, consistent with, but independent of Scripture, has existed in the Church from the Apostolic age. "Why shouldest thou be in that excessive slavery to the letter," says Nazianzen, "and yield to a Judaical wisdom, poring over syllables, while letting slip realities? Suppose, on thy saying twice five, or twice seven, I were to understand thence ten or fourteen; or if I spoke of a man, when thou hadst named an animal rational and mortal, should I in that case appear to thee to trifle? how could I so appear, in merely expressing your own meaning?"[a] But, inasmuch as this liberty was an evangelical privilege which might be allowed to the Arian disputants, on the other hand it was a dangerous privilege also, ever to be subjected to a profound respect for the sacred text, a cautious adherence to the whole of the doctrine therein contained, and a regard also for those received statements, which, though not given to us as inspired, probably are derived from inspired teachers. Now the most liberal admission which can be made in behalf of the Arians, is, to grant that they did not *altogether* throw aside in controversy the authority of Scripture; i. e. proclaim themselves unbelievers; for it is evident that they took only just so much of it, as would afford them a basis for erecting their system of heresy by an abstract logical process. The mere words, Father and Son, γέννησις, &c. were all they wanted of revealed authority; they professed to do all the rest for themselves. The meaning of these terms in their context, the illustration which they afford to each other, and, much more, the Divine doctrine considered as one undivided message, variously exhibited and dispersed in the various parts of Scripture, were excluded from the consideration of controversialists, who thought that truth was gained by disputing instead of investigating.

Their assumption of the absence of mystery in theology.

2. Next, it will be observed, that throughout their discussions they assumed as an axiom that there could be no mystery in the Scripture doctrines respecting the nature of God. In this, indeed, they did but follow the example of the contemporary spurious theologies; though their abstract mode of reasoning from the mere force of one or two Scripture terms, necessarily forced them more than others into the use and avowal of it. The Sabellian, to avoid mystery, denied the distinction of Persons in the Divine nature. Paulus, and afterwards Apollinaris, for the same reason, denied the existence of two Intelligent Principles at once, the Word and the human

[a] Petav. iv. 5. § 6.

Soul, in the Person of Christ. The Arians adopted both errors. Yet what is a mystery in doctrine, but a difficulty or inconsistency in the intellectual expression of it? and what reason is there for supposing that revelation addresses itself to the intellect, except so far as it is necessary for conveying and fixing its truths on the heart? Why are we not content to take and use what is given us, without asking questions? The Catholics on the other hand, pursued the intellectual investigation of the doctrine, under the guidance of Scripture and Tradition, merely as far as some immediate necessity called for it; and cared little though one mode of expression seemed inconsistent with another. E. g. they developed the notion of οὐσία against the Pantheists, of the ἐνυπόστατος λόγος against the Sabellians, of the ἐνδιάθετος against heathen Polytheism and the Emanatists; still, they did not use these for more than shadows of sacred truth, symbols witnessing against the speculations into which the unbridled intellect fell. Accordingly they were for a time inconsistent with each other in the minor particulars of their doctrinal statements, being far more bent on opposing error, than forming a theology;—inconsistent, i. e. before the experience of controversy, and the voice of Tradition, had detached them from less accurate or advisable expressions, and made them concede, or at least compare and adjust their several declarations. Thus, some said that there was but one ὑπόστασις (substance) in the Godhead; others three ὑποστάσεις (substances or persons) and one οὐσία (substance); others spoke of more than one οὐσία. Some allowed, some rejected, the terms προβολὴ and ὁμοούσιον, according as they were guided by the prevailing heresy of the day, and their own judgment concerning the mode of meeting it. Some spoke of the Son as existing from everlasting in the Divine Mind; others implied that the Logos was everlasting, and became the Son in time. Some asserted His ἄναρχον, others denied it. Some when interrogated by heretics, taught that He was begotten by the Father, θελήσει; others, φύσει καὶ μὴ ἐκ βουλήσεως: οὔτε θέλοντος τοῦ Πατρὸς οὔτε μὴ θέλοντος, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ ὑπὲρ βουλὴν φύσει; others spoke of a σύνδρομος θέλησις.[a] Some declare that God is ἀριθμῷ τρεῖς: others, numerically one; while to others it might appear more philosophical to exclude the idea of number altogether, in the discussion of that Mysterious Nature, Which is beyond comparison, whether viewed as One or Three, and neither falls under nor forms any conceivable species.[b]

Their consequent misrepresentation of the catholic doctrine.

In all such various statements, the object is clear and unexceptionable, being merely that of protesting and practically guarding against dangerous deductions from the

[a] Justin Tryph. 61. 100. &c. Petav. vi. 8. § 14, 15, 18.
[b] Petav. iv. 13.

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Scripture doctrine; and the problem implied in all of them is, to determine how this end may best be effected. There are no signs of an intellectual curiosity in the tenor of these Catholic expositions, prying into things not seen as yet; nor of an ambition to account for the representations of the truth given us in the sacred writings. But such a temper is the very characteristic of the Arian disputants. They insisted on taking the terms of Scripture and the Church for more than they signified, and expected their opponents to admit inferences altogether foreign from the theological sense in which they were really used. Hence they sometimes accused the orthodox of heresy, sometimes of inconsistency. To believe that the pre-existent Logos was the Son of God, was called Valentinianism; that the Son was the real Logos, was called Sabellianism. The Fathers of the Church have come down to us loaded with the imputation of the strangest errors, merely because they united truths which heresies but shared among themselves; nor have writers been wanting in modern times, from malevolence or carelessness, to aggravate these charges. The mystery of their creed has been converted into an evidence of concurrent heresies. To believe in the actual Incarnation of the Eternal Wisdom, has been treated, not as orthodoxy, but as an Ariano-Sabellianism. Gregory of Neocæsarea was called a Sabellian, because he spoke of one substance in the Divine nature; he was called a forerunner of Arius, because he said that Christ was a creature. Origen, so frequently accused of Arianism, seemed to be a Sabellian, when he said that the Son was the *αὐτοαλήθεια*. Athenagoras is charged with Sabellianism by the very writer (Petau), whose general theory it is, that he was one of those Platonizing fathers who anticipated Arius.[a] Alexander who at the opening of the controversy was accused by Arius of Sabellianizing, has in these latter times been detected by the flippant Jortin to be an advocate of Semi-Arianism,[b] which was the peculiar enemy and assailant of Sabellianism in all its forms. The celebrated word *ὁμοούσιον* has not escaped a similar contrariety of charges. Arius himself ascribes it to the Manichees; the Semi-Arians at Ancyra anathematize it as Sabellian. It is in the same spirit that Arius, in his letter to Alexander, scoffs at the *ἀειγενὲς* and *ἀγεννητογενής*, ascribed to the Son on the orthodox system; as if the inconsistency, which the full sense of the words involved, was a sufficient refutation of the doctrine really expressed by them.

The Catholics explain

The Catholics sustained these charges with a prudence, which has, (humanly speaking), secured the success of their cause; though it has availed little to remove the calumnies

[a] Bull Defens iii. 5 § 4
[b] Jortin Eccles Hist vol ii pp 179, 180

heaped upon themselves. The great Dionysius, who has himself been defamed by the "accuser of the brethren," declares perspicuously the principle of the orthodox teaching. "The particular expressions which I have used," he says, in his defence, "must not be taken separate from each other . . . . . whereas my opponents have separated two insignificant words from the context, and sling them at me from a distance; not understanding, that, in the case of subjects partially known, illustrations foreign to them in nature, nay, inconsistent with each other, aid the discussion." [a]

Guard their statements, and are accused of Materialism.

However, the Catholics found themselves under the necessity of removing, as far as they could, their own verbal inconsistencies, and of sanctioning one form of expression above the rest. Hence distinctions, e. g. were made between the use of ἀγένητος and ἀγέννητος, ἀρχὴ and αἴτιον, as already noticed. But these, clear and intelligible as they were in themselves, and valuable, both as facilitating the argument and disabusing the perplexed inquirer, opened to the heretical party the opportunity of a new misrepresentation. Whenever the orthodox writers showed an anxiety to reconcile and discriminate their own expressions, the charge of Manicheeism was urged against them; as if to dwell upon, were to rest in the material images which were the signs of the unknown truths. E. g. the phrase, "Light of Light," the orthodox and almost apostolic emblem of the derivation of the Son from the Father, as symbolizing Their inseparability, mutual relation, and the separate fulness and exact parallelism of Their perfections, was interpreted by the gross conceptions of the Manichæan Hieracas.[b]

Arians adopt a figurative interpretation

3. When in answer to such objections the Catholics denied that they attached other than a figurative meaning to their words, their opponents suddenly turned round, and professed the figurative meaning of the terms to be that which they themselves advocated. This inconsistency in their mode of conducting the argument deserves notice. It has already been instanced in the original argument of Arius, who maintained, that, since the word *Son* in its literal sense included among other ideas that of a beginning, the Son of God had had a beginning or was created, and therefore was not really a Son of God at all. It was on account of such unscrupulous dexterity in the controversy, that Alexander and Athanasius give them

[a] Athan de Sent Dionys 18

[b] The ἐκ Θεοῦ became the subject of the following profane examination· εἰ γὰρ ἐκ Θεοῦ ἐστὶ, καὶ ἐγέννησεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ὁ Θεὸς, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἐξ ἰδίας ὑποστάσεως φύσει, ἢ ἐκ τῆς ἰδίας οὐσίας, οὐκοῦν ὠγκώθη, ἢ τομὴν ἐδέξατο, ἢ ἐν τῷ γεννᾶν ἐπλατύνθη, ἢ συνεστάλη, ἤ τι τῶν κατὰ τὰ πάθη τὰ σωματικὰ ὑπέστη Epiph Hær lxix 15 Or to take the objection made at Nicæa to the ὁμοούσιον by Eusebius and some others In the words of Socrates. ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἔφασαν ὁμοούσιον εἶναι, ὃ ἔκ τινός ἐστιν, ἢ κατὰ μερισμὸν, ἢ κατὰ ῥεῦσιν, ἢ κατὰ προβολήν· κατὰ προβολὴν μὲν, ὡς ἐκ ῥιζῶν βλάστημα, κατὰ δὲ ῥεῦσιν, ὡς οἱ πατρικοὶ παῖδες, κατὰ μερισμὸν δὲ, ὡς βώλου χρυσίδες δύο ἢ τρεῖς· κατ' οὐδὲν δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ὁ Υἱός, διὰ τοῦτο οὐ συγκατατίθεσθαι τῇ πίστει ἔλεγον Socr i 8

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the title of chameleons. "They are as variable and uncertain in their opinions, (says the latter,) as chameleons in their colour. When refuted, they look confused, and when examined they are perplexed; however, at length they recover their assurance, and bring forward some evasion. Then, if this in turn is exposed, they do not rest till they have devised some new absurdity, and, as Scripture says, meditate vain things, so that they may obtain the privilege of being profane. Thus the Jews first asked a sign from Christ; next attributed His miracles to Beelzebub."[a]

Their interpretation of γέννησις by creation.

Let us, however, pursue the Arians on their new ground of allegory. It has been already observed, that they explain the word μονογενὴς in the sense of μονοκτιστός; and considered the oneness of the Father and Son to consist in an unity of character and will, *such as exists between God and His Saints*, not in nature.

Implies a base temper of mind.

Now, surely, the temper of mind, which had recourse to such a comparison between Christ and us, to defend a heresy, was still more odious, if possible, than the original impiety of the heresy itself. Thus, the honours graciously bestowed upon human nature, as well as the condescending self-abasement of our Lord, were made to subserve the cause of the blasphemer. It is a known peculiarity of the message of mercy, that it views the Church of Christ as if clothed with, or hidden within, the glory of Him Who ransomed it; so that there is no name or title belonging to Him literally, which is not in a secondary sense applied to the reconciled penitent. As our Lord is the Priest and King of His redeemed, they, as members of Him, are accounted kings and priests also. They are said to be Christs, or the anointed, to partake of the Divine nature, to be the well-beloved of God, His sons, one with Him, and heirs of glory; in order to express the fulness and the transcendant excellence of the blessings gained to the Saints by Christ. In all these forms of speech, no religious mind runs the risk of confusing its own privileges with the real prerogatives of Him Who gave them; yet it is obviously difficult in argument to discriminate between the primary and secondary use of the words, and to elicit and exhibit the delicate reasons lying in the context of Scripture for conclusions, which the common sense of a Christian is impatient as well as shocked to hear disputed. Who would so trifle with words, to take a parallel case, as to argue that, because Christians are said by St. John to "know all things," that therefore God is not omniscient in a sense infinitely above man's highest intelligence?

And a shallow philosophy.

It may be observed, moreover, that the Arians were inconsistent in their application of the allegorical rule, by which

[a] Athan. de decr. Nic 1. Socr. i. 6.

they attempted to interpret Scripture; and showed as great deficiency in their philosophical conceptions of God, as in their practical devotion to Him. They seem to have fancied that some of His acts were more comprehensible than others, and might accordingly be made the basis on which the rest might be interpreted. They referred the γέννησις to the notion of creation; but creation is in fact as mysterious as the divine γέννησις; i. e. we are as little able to understand our own words, when we speak of the world's being called into being at God's word, as when we confess that His Eternal Perfections are reiterated, without being doubled, in the Person of His Son. "How is it," asks Athanasius, "that the impious men dare to speak flippantly on subjects too sacred to approach, mortals as they are, and incapable of explaining even God's works upon earth? Why do I say, His earthly works? let them treat of themselves, if so be they can investigate their own nature; yet venturous and self-confident, they tremble not before the glory of God, which angels desire reverently to inspect, though in nature and rank far more excellent than they."[a] Accordingly he argues that nothing is gained by resolving one of the divine operations into another; that *to make* when attributed to God is essentially distinct from the same act when ascribed to man, as incomprehensible as the Divine γέννησις;[b] and consequently that it is our highest wisdom to take the truths of Scripture as we find them there, and use them for the purposes for which they are vouchsafed, without attempting accurately to systematize or to explain away. Far from elucidating, we are evidently enfeebling the revealed doctrine, by substituting μονοκτιστὸν for μονογενές; for if the words are synonymous, why should the latter be insisted on in Scripture? Accordingly, it is proper to make a distinction between the *primary* and the *literal* meaning of a term. All the terms which human language applies to the Supreme Being, may perhaps be more or less figurative; but their primary and secondary meaning may still remain as distinct, as when they are referred to earthly objects. We need not give up the primary meaning of the word *Son* as opposed to the sense of adoption, because we forbear to use it in its literal and material sense.

Arian reasonings tend to polytheism.

4. This being the general character of the Arian reasonings, it is natural to inquire what was the *object* towards which they tended. Now it will be found, that this audacious and elaborate sophistry could not escape one of two conclusions;—either the establishment of a sort of polytheism, or, as the

[a] Athan. on Matt. xi. 22. § 6.

[b] Athan. de decr. Nic. 11. vid. also Greg. Naz. Orat. 35. p. 566. Euseb. Eccl. Theol. i. 12.

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more practical alternative, that of the mere humanity of Christ; i. e. either the superstition of paganism, or the virtual atheism of philosophy. If the professions of the Arians are to be believed, they confessed our Lord to be God, πληρὴς θεός, yet at the same time to be infinitely distant from the perfections of the One Eternal Cause. Here at once a ditheism is acknowledged; but Athanasius pushes on the admission to that of an unlimited polytheism. "If," he says, "the Son were an object of worship for His transcendant glory, then every subordinate being is bound to worship his superior."[a]

Or to Humanitarianism.

But so repulsive is the notion of a secondary God both to reason, and much more to Christianity, that the real tendency of Arianism lay towards the sole remaining alternative, the humanitarian scheme.—Its essential agreement with Samosatenism has already been incidentally shown; it differed from it only when the pressure of controversy required it. Its history is the proof of this. It started with a boldness not inferior to that of Paulus; but as soon as it was attacked, it suddenly coiled itself into a defensive posture, and plunged amid the thickets of verbal controversy. At first it had not scrupled to admit the peccable nature of the Son; but it soon learned to disguise such consequences of its doctrine, and avowed that, in matter of fact, He was indefectible. Next it borrowed the language of Platonism, which, without committing it to any real renunciation of its former declarations, admitted of the dress of a high and almost enthusiastic piety. Then it professed an entire agreement with the Catholics, except as to the adoption of the single word ὁμοούσιος, which they urged upon it, and concerning which, it affected to entertain conscientious scruples. At this time it was ready to confess that our Lord was the true God, God of God, born ἀχρόνως, or before all time, and not a creature as other creatures, but peculiarly the Offspring of God, and His accurate Image. Afterwards, changing its ground, it protested against non-scriptural expressions, of which itself had been the chief inventor; and proposed an union of all opinions, on the comprehensive basis of a creed, in which the Son should be merely declared to be κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιος, or simply ὅμοιος τῷ Πατρί. This versatility of profession is an illustration of the character given of the Arians by Athanasius, some pages back, which is further exemplified in their conduct at the Council in which they were condemned; but it is here adduced to show the danger to which the Church was exposed from a party who had no fixed tenet, except that of opposition to the true notion of Christ's divinity; and whose teaching, accordingly, had no firm footing of internal consistency to rest upon,

[a] Cudw Intell. Syst. 4. § 36. Petav. ii. 12 § 6.

till it descended to the notion of His simple humanity; to the doctrine, that is, of Artemas and Paulus, the forerunners of Arius, though they too, as well as he, had enveloped their impieties in such admissions and professions, as assimilated it more or less in appearance to the faith of the Catholic Church.

Conduct of the Arians at Nicæa.

The conduct of the Arians at Nicæa, as referred to, was as follows. "When the Bishops in council assembled," says Athanasius, an eye-witness, "were desirous of ridding the Church of the impious expressions invented by Arius, τὸ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, τὸ κτίσμα λέγειν τὸν Υἱὸν, τὸ ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, ὅτι τρεπτῆς ἐστὶ φύσεως, and perpetuating those which we receive on the authority of Scripture, that the Son is ἐκ Θεοῦ φύσει μονογενής, the Word, Power, the sole Wisdom of the Father, very God, as the Apostle John says, and as Paul, the Radiance of His glory, and the express Image of His Person; the Eusebians, influenced by their own heterodoxy, said one to another, 'Let us agree to this; for we too are ἐκ Θεοῦ, there being one God, *of Whom* are all things.' . . . . The Bishops, however, discerning their cunning, and the artifice adopted by their impiety, in order to express more clearly the ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, wrote down ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Θεοῦ, of the substance of God; creatures being spoken of as ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, as not existing of themselves without cause, but having a beginning of production; but the Son being peculiarly ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς οὐσίας . . . . Again, on the Bishops asking the few advocates of Arianism present, whether they allowed the Son to be, not a creature, but the sole Power, Wisdom, and Image of the Father, eternal, and in all respects like the Father (ἀπαράλλακτον,) and very God, the Eusebians were detected making signs to each other, to express that this also fell in with their sentiments. 'For we too,' they said, 'are called in Scripture the image and glory of God; we are eternal . . . . There are many powers, God being the Lord of them. Nay, that we are the real sons of God, is proved expressly from the text, in which the Son calls us brethren. Nor should their assertion, that He is the very (true) God, distress us; for inasmuch as He was made true, He is true.' This was the abandoned meaning of the Arians. But here too the Bishops seeing through their deceit, brought together from Scriptu[illegible]
the radiance, source and stream, express Image of Person, [illegible]
Thy light we shall see light,' 'I and the Father are one, [illegible]
last of all, expressed themselves more clearly and co[illegible]
in the phrase ὁμοούσιον εἶναι τῷ Πατρὶ τὸν Υἱόν; for [illegible]
was beforesaid has this meaning. As to their [illegible]
about non-scriptural phrases, they themselves re[illegible]
was they who began with their impious expre[illegible]
[illegible] ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, which are n[illegible]

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and now they make it a charge, that they are detected by means of non-scriptural terms, which have been reverently adopted.[a]" The last remark is important; even those traditional statements of the Catholic doctrine, which were more explicit than Scripture, had not taken the shape of formulæ. It was the Arian defined propositions of the ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, and the like, which called for the imposition of the ὁμοούσιον.

Conduct of the Catholics towards them.

It has sometimes been said, that the Catholics anxiously searched for some offensive test, which might operate to the exclusion of the Arians. This is not correct, inasmuch as they have no need to search; the ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας having been openly denied by the Arians, five years before the Council, and no practical distinction between it and the ὁμοούσιον existing, till the era of Basil and his Semi-Arians. Yet, had it been necessary, doubtless it would have been their duty to seek for a test of this nature; nay, to urge upon the heretical teachers the plain consequences of their doctrine, and to drive them into the adoption of them. These consequences are certain of being elicited in the long run; and it is but equitable to anticipate them in the persons of the heresiarchs, rather than to suffer them gradually to unfold and spread far and wide after their day, sapping the faith of their deluded and less guilty followers. Many a man would be deterred from outstepping the truth, could he see the end of his course from the beginning. The Arians felt this, and therefore resisted a detection, which would at once expose them to the condemnation of all serious men. In this lies the difference between the treatment due to an individual in error, and to one who is confident enough to publish his innovations. The former claims from us the most affectionate sympathy, and the most considerate attention. The latter should meet with no mercy; he assumes the office of the Tempter, and, so far forth as his error goes, must be dealt with by the competent authority, as if he were embodied Evil. To spare him is a false and dangerous pity. It is to endanger the souls of thousands, and it is uncharitable towards himself.

[a] Athan. Ep. ad Afros., 5, 6.

CHAPTER III.

THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA.

SECTION I.

HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL.

Subject of the chapter

THE authentic account of the proceedings of the Nicene Council is not extant.[a] It has in consequence been judged expedient to put together in the last chapter whatever was necessary for the explanation of the Catholic and Arian creeds, and the controversy concerning them, rather than to reserve any portion of the doctrinal discussion for the present, though in some respects the more appropriate place for its introduction. Here then the transactions at Nicæa shall be reviewed in their political or ecclesiastical aspect.

History of the rise of Arianism.

Arius first published his heresy about the year 319. His previous turbulence has already been mentioned. It is said, that, on the death of Achillas, he had aspired to the primacy of the Egyptian Church; and, according to Philostorgius,[b] the historian of his party, a writer of little credit, he had generously resigned his claims in favour of Alexander, who was elected. His ambitious character renders it not improbable that he was a candidate for the vacant dignity; but the difference of age between himself and Alexander, which must have been considerable, at once accounts for the elevation of the latter, and is an evidence of the indecency of Arius in becoming a competitor at all. His first attack on the Catholic doctrine was conducted with an openness, which, considering the general duplicity of his party, is the most honourable trait in his character. In a public meeting of the Clergy of Alexandria, he accused his diocesan of Sabellianism; an insult which Alexander, from deference

[a] Vid. Ittigius Hist. Conc. Nic. §. 1. The rest of this volume is drawn up from the following authorities: Eusebius vit. Const., Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret Hist. Eccles., the various historical tracts of Athanasius, Epiphanius Hær. lxix. lxxiii., and the Acta Conciliorum. Of moderns, especially Tillemont and Petavius; then, Maimbourg's history of Arianism, the Benedictine life of Athanasius, Cave's life of Athanasius and Literary History, Gibbon's Roman History, and Mr. Bridges' Reign of Constantine.

[b] Philost. i. 3.

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to the talents and learning of the objector, sustained with somewhat too little of the dignity befitting "the Ruler of the people." The mischief, which ensued from his misplaced meekness, was considerable. Arius was one of the public preachers of Alexandria; and, as some suppose, Master of the Catechetical School. Others of the city Presbyters were stimulated by his example to similar irregularities. Colluthus, Carponas, and Sarmatas, began to form each his own party in a Church, which Meletius had already troubled; and Colluthus went so far as to promulgate an heretical doctrine, and to found a sect. Still hoping to settle these disorders without the exercise of his episcopal power, Alexander summoned a meeting of his Clergy, in which Arius was allowed to state his doctrines freely, and to argue in their defence; and, whether from a desire not to overbear the discussion, or from distrust in his own power of accurately expressing the truth, and anxiety about the charge of heresy brought against himself, the Primate, though in no wise a man of feeble mind, is said to have refrained from committing himself on the controverted subject, "applauding," as Sozomen tells us, "sometimes the one party, sometimes the other." [a] At length the error of Arius appeared to be of that serious and confirmed nature, that countenance of it became sinful. The heresy began to spread beyond the Alexandrian Church; the indecision of Alexander excited the murmurs of the Catholics; till, at last, called unwillingly to the discharge of a severe duty, he gave public evidence of his real indignation against the blasphemies which he had so long endured,[b] and excommunicated Arius with his followers.

Its progress.

This proceeding, obligatory, as it was, on a Christian Bishop, and ratified by the concurrence of a provincial Council, and expedient even for the immediate interests of Christianity, had other Churches been equally honest in their allegiance to the true faith, had the effect of increasing the influence of Arius, by throwing him upon his fellow-Lucianists of the rival dioceses of the East, and giving notoriety to his name and tenets. In Egypt, indeed, he had already been supported by the Meletian faction; which, in spite of its profession of orthodoxy, continued in alliance with him, through jealousy to the Church, even after he had fallen into heresy. But the countenance of these schismatics was of small consideration, compared with the powerful aid frankly tendered him, on his excommunication, by the leading men in the great Catholic communities of Asia Minor and the East. Palestine was the first to afford him a retreat from Alexandrian orthodoxy, where he received a cordial reception from the learned Euse-

[a] Soz. i. 14.

[b] πρὸς ὀργὴν ἐξάπτεται. Socr. i. 6.

bius, Metropolitan of Cæsarea, Athanasius of Anazarbus, and others; who, in letters on his behalf, did not hesitate to declare their concurrence with him in the full extent of his heresy. Eusebius even declared that Christ was not very God (ἀληθινὸς Θεός); and his associate Athanasius asserted, that He was in the number of the hundred sheep of the parable, i. e. the creatures of God.

Arius supported by Eusebius.

Yet, in spite of the countenance of these and other eminent men, Arius found it difficult to maintain his ground against the general indignation which his heresy excited. He was resolutely opposed by Philogonius, patriarch of Antioch, and Macarius, of Jerusalem; who promptly answered the call made upon them by Alexander, in his circulars addressed to the Syrian Churches. In the meanwhile Eusebius, of Nicomedia, the early friend of Arius, and the ecclesiastical adviser of Constantia, the Emperor's sister, declared in his favour; and offered him a refuge, which he readily accepted, from the growing unpopularity which attended him in Palestine. Supported by the patronage of so powerful a prelate, Arius was now scarcely to be considered in the position of a schismatic or an outcast. He assumed in consequence a more calm and respectful demeanour towards Alexander; imitated the courteous language of his friend; and, in his epistle which was introduced into the last chapter, addresses his diocesan with an affectation of humility, and defers or appeals to previous statements made by Alexander himself on the doctrine in dispute. At this time also he seems to have corrected and completed his system. George, afterwards Bishop of Laodicea, taught him an evasion for the orthodox test· ἐκ Θεοῦ, by a reference to 1 Cor. xi. 12. Asterius, a sophist of Cappadocia, supported the secondary sense of the word Logos as applied to Christ, by a reference to such passages as Joel ii. 25; and, in order to explain away the force of the μονογενής, maintained, that to Christ alone out of all creatures it had been given, to be fashioned under the immediate presence and perilous weight of the Divine hand. Now too, as it appears, the title of ἀληθινὸς Θεός was ascribed to Him; the ἀλλοιωτὸν was withdrawn; and an admission of His *actual* indefectibility substituted for it. The heresy being thus placed on a less exceptionable basis, the influence of Eusebius was exerted in Councils both in Bithynia and Palestine; in which Arius was acknowledged, and more urgent solicitations addressed to Alexander, in order to effect his re-admission into the Church.

Necessity for the interference of the State.

This was the history of the controversy for the first four or five years of its existence; i. e. till the era of the battle of Hadrianople (A. D. 323,) by the issue of which Constantine, becoming master of the Roman world, was at liberty to turn

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his thoughts to the state of Christianity in the Eastern Provinces of the Empire. From this date it is connected with civil history; a consequence natural, and indeed necessary under the existing circumstances, though it was the occasion of subjecting Christianity to fresh persecutions, in place of those which its nominal triumph had terminated. When a heresy, condemned and excommunicated by one Church, was taken up by another, and independent Christian bodies thus stood in open opposition, nothing was left to those who desired peace, to say nothing of orthodoxy, but to bring the question under the notice of a General Council. But as a previous step, the leave of the civil power was plainly necessary for so public a display of that wide-spreading association, of which the faith of the Gospel was the uniting and animating principle. Thus the Church could not meet together in one, without entering into a sort of negociation with the powers that be; whose jealousy it is the duty of Christians, both as individuals and as a body, if possible, to dispel. On the other hand, the Roman Emperor, as a professed disciple of the truth, was of course bound to protect its interests, and to afford every facility for its establishment in purity and efficacy. It was under these circumstances that the Nicene Council was convoked.

Constantine.

Now we must direct our view for a while to the character and history of Constantine. It is an ungrateful task to discuss the private opinions and motives of an Emperor, who was the first to profess himself the Protector of the Church, and to relieve it from the abject and suffering condition, in which it had lain for three centuries. Constantine is our benefactor; inasmuch as we, who now live, may be considered to have received the gift of Christianity, by means of the increased influence which he gave to the Church. And, were it not that in conferring his benefaction, he burdened it with the bequest of an heresy, which outlived his age by many centuries, and still exists in its effects in the divisions of the East, nothing would here be said, from mere grateful recollection of him, by way of analyzing the state of mind, in which he viewed the benefit which he has conveyed to us. But his conduct, as it discovers itself in the subsequent history, natural as it was in his case, yet has somewhat of a warning in it, which must not be neglected in after times.

Nature of his Christianity.

It is of course impossible accurately to describe the various feelings, with which one in Constantine's peculiar situation was likely to regard Christianity; yet the joint effect of them all may be gathered from his actual conduct, and the state of the civilized world at the time. He found his empire distracted with civil and religious dissensions, which tended

to the dissolution of society; at a time too, when the barbarians without were pressing upon it with a vigour, formidable in itself, but far more menacing in consequence of the decay of the ancient spirit of Rome. He perceived the powers of its old polytheism, from whatever cause, exhausted; and a newly risen philosophy vainly endeavouring to resuscitate a mythology which had done its work, and now, like all things of earth, was fast returning to the dust from which it was taken. He heard the same philosophy inculcating the principles of that more exalted and refined religion, which a civilized age will always require; and he witnessed the same substantial teaching, as he would consider it, embodied in the precepts, and enforced by the energetic discipline, the union, and the example of the Christian Church. Here his thoughts would rest, as in a natural solution of the investigation, to which the state of his empire gave rise; and, without knowing enough of the internal characters of Christianity, to care to instruct himself in them, he would discern, on the face of it a doctrine more real than that of philosophy, and a rule of life more self-denying than that of the Republic. The Gospel seemed to be the fit instrument of a civil reformation,[a] being but a new form of the old wisdom, which had existed in the world at large from the beginning. Revering, nay, in one sense, honestly submitting to its faith, yet he acknowledged it rather as a system, than joined it as an institution; and, by refraining from the sacrament of baptism till his last illness, he acted in the spirit of men of the world in every age, who dislike to pledge themselves to engagements which they still intend to fulfil, and to descend from the position of judges, to that of disciples of the truth.[b]

He aims at peace apart from truth.

Peace is so eminently the perfection of the Christian temper, conduct, and discipline, and it had been so wonderfully exemplified in the previous history of the Church, that it was almost unavoidable in a heathen soldier and statesman, to regard it as the sole precept of the Gospel. It required a far more refined moral perception, to detect and to approve the principle, on which this peace is grounded in Scripture; to submit to the dictation of truth, as such, as a primary authority in matters of political and private conduct; to understand how belief in a certain creed was a condition of divine favour, how the social union was intended to result from an unity of opinions, the love of man to spring from the love of God, and zeal to be prior in the succession of Christian graces to benevolence. It had been predicted by Him Who came to offer peace to the world, that, in

[a] Gibbon. Hist. ch. xx.

[b] Vid. his speech, Euseb. vit. Const. iv. 62.

matter of fact, that gift would be changed into the sword of discord; mankind being alienated from the doctrine, more than they were won over by the amiableness, of Christianity. But He alone was able thus to discern, through what a succession of difficulties Divine truth advances to its final victory; shallow minds anticipate the end apart from the course which leads to it. Especially they who receive scarcely more of His teaching, than the instinct of civilization recognizes, (and Constantine must, on the whole, be classed among such,) view the religious dissensions of the Church as simply evil, and, (as they would fain prove,) contrary to His own precepts; whereas in fact they are but the history of truth in its first stage of trial, when it aims at being "pure" before it is "peaceable;" and are reprehensible only so far, as baser passions mix themselves with that true loyalty towards God, which desires His glory in the first place, and only in the second place, the tranquillity and good order of society.

Edict of Milan.

The Edict of Milan, (A. D. 313) was among the first effects of Constantine's anxiety, to restore fellowship of feeling to the members of his distracted empire. In it an absolute toleration was given by him and his colleague Licinius, to the Christians and all other persuasions, to follow the form of worship which each had adopted for himself; and it was granted, with the professed view of consulting for the peace of their people.

Schism of the Donatists.

A year did not elapse from the date of this Edict, when Constantine found it necessary to support it by severe repressive measures against the Donatists of Africa, though their offences were scarcely of a civil nature. Their schism had originated in the disappointed ambition of two presbyters; who fomented an opposition to Cæcilian, illegally elevated, as they pretended, to the episcopate of Carthage. Growing into a sect, they appealed to Constantine, who referred their cause to the arbitration of successive Councils. These pronounced in favour of Cæcilian; and, on Constantine's reviewing and confirming their sentence, the defeated party assailed him with intemperate complaints, accused Hosius, his adviser, of partiality in the decision, stirred up the magistrates against the Catholic Church, and endeavoured to deprive it of its places of worship. Constantine in consequence took possession of their Churches, banished their seditious bishops, and put some of them to death. A love of truth is not irreconcileable either with an unlimited toleration, or an exclusive patronage of a selected religion; but to endure or discountenance error, according as it is, or is not, represented in an independent system and existing authority, to spare the pagans and to tyrannize over the schismatics, is the conduct

of one who subjected religious principle to expediency, and aimed at peace, as a supreme good, by forcible measures where it was possible, otherwise by conciliation.

Further evidence of the political character of his religion.

It must be observed, moreover, that subsequently to the celebrated vision of the Labarum, (A. D. 312.) he publicly invoked the Deity as one and the same in all forms of worship; and at a later period, A.D. 321.) he promulgated simultaneous edicts for the observance of Sunday, and the due consultation of the aruspices.[a] On the other hand, as in the Edict of Milan, so in his letters and edicts connected with the Arian controversy, the same reference is made to external peace and good order, as the chief object towards which his thoughts were directed. The same desire of tranquillity, led him to summon to the Nicene Council the Novatian Bishop Acesius, as well as the orthodox prelates. At a later period still, when he extended a more open countenance to the Church as an institution, the same principle discovers itself in his conduct, which actuated him in his measures against the Donatists. In proportion as he recognizes the Catholic body, he drops his toleration of the sectaries. He prohibited the conventicles of the Valentinians, Montanists, and other heretics; who, at his bidding, joined the Church in such numbers, (many of them, says Eusebius, "through fear of the Imperial threat, with hypocritical minds,"[b]) that at length both heresy and schism might be said to disappear from the face of society. Now let us observe his conduct in the Arian controversy.

He has intelligence o the Arian controversy.

Doubtless it was a grievous disappointment to a generous and large-minded prince, to discover that the Church itself, from which he had looked for the consolidation of his empire, was convulsed by dissensions such as were unknown amid the heartless wranglings of Pagan philosophy. The disturbances caused by the Donatists, which his acquisition of Italy (A. D. 312.) had opened upon his view, extended from the borders of the Alexandrian patriarchate to the ocean. The conquest of the East (A.D. 323.) did but enlarge his prospect of the distractions of Christendom. The patriarchate just mentioned had lately been visited by a deplorable heresy, which having run its course through the chief parts of Egypt, Lybia, and Cyrenaica, had attacked Palestine and Syria, and spread thence into the dioceses of Asia Minor and the Lydian Proconsulate.

Writes to Alexander and Arius

Constantine was informed of the growing schism at Nicomedia, and at once addressed a letter to Alexander and Arius jointly;[c] a reference to which will enable the reader to verify for himself the account above given of the nature of the Emperor's Christianity. He professes therein two

[a] Gibbon, Hist. ibid. [b] Euseb. vit. Const. iii. 66. [c] Ibid. ii. 64—72

motives as impelling him in his public conduct; first, the desire of effecting the reception, throughout his dominions, of some one definite and complete form of religious worship; next, that of settling and invigorating the civil institutions of the empire. Desirous of securing an unity of sentiment among all the believers in the Deity, he professes first to have directed his attention to the religious dissensions of Africa, where he had hoped to have had the aid of the Oriental Christians in his attempt to terminate them. "But," he continues, "glorious and divine Providence! how grievously were my ears, or rather my heart wounded, by the report of a rising schism among you far more acrimonious than the African dissensions. . . . On investigation, I must say, that the reasons for this eagerness on both sides appear to me insignificant and worthless. . . As I understand the matter, it seems that you, Alexander, were asking the separate opinions of your clergy on some passage of Scripture, or rather were inquiring about some unedifying question, when you, Arius, inconsiderately committed yourself to statements, which should either never have come into your mind, or have been at once repressed. On this a difference ensued, Christian intercourse was suspended, the sacred flock was divided into two, and the harmonious order of the Church broken . . My advice to you is, neither to ask nor answer questions, which instead of being Scriptural, are the mere sport of idleness, or an exercise of ability; at best, keep them to yourselves, and do not publish them. . . You agree in fundamentals; neither of you is introducing any novel mode of worship, so that it is in your power to unite in one communion. Even the philosophers of one sect can agree together, though differing in particulars. . . Is it right for brothers to oppose brothers, for the sake of trifles? . . . Such conduct might be expected from the multitude, or from the intemperance of youth; but little befits your sacred order and experience of the world." Such is the substance of his letter, which, written on an imperfect knowledge of the facts of the case, and with somewhat of the prejudices of Eclectic liberalism, was inapplicable, even where abstractedly true; his fault lying in his supposing, that an individual like himself who had not even received the grace of baptism, could discriminate between great and little questions in theology. He concludes with the following words, which show the amiableness and sincerity of a mind, in a measure awakened from the darkness of heathenism, though they savour at the same time of the affectation of the rhetorician: "Give me back my days of calm, my nights of security; that I may experience henceforth the comfort of the clear light, and the cheerfulness of tranquillity. Otherwise, I shall sigh and be

dissolved in tears. . . So great is my grief, that I put off my journey to the East on the news of your dissension. . . . Open for me that path towards you, which your contentions have closed up. Let me see you and all other cities in happiness; that I may offer due thanksgivings to God above, for the unanimity and free intercourse which is seen among you."

Convokes the Council of Nicæa.

This letter was conveyed to the Alexandrian Church by Hosius, who was appointed by the Emperor to mediate between the contending parties. A Council was called, in which some minor irregularities were arranged, but nothing settled on the main question in dispute. Hosius returned to his master to report an unsuccessful mission, and to advise, as the sole measure which remained to be adopted, the calling of a general Council, in which the Catholic doctrine might be formally declared, and a judgment promulgated as to the basis upon which communion with the Church was henceforth to be determined. Constantine assented; and, discovering that the ecclesiastical authorities were earnest in condemning the tenets of Arius, as being an audacious innovation on the received creed, he suddenly adopted a new line of conduct towards the heresy; and in a letter which he addressed to Arius, professes himself a zealous advocate of Christian truth, ventures to expound it, and attacks Arius with a vehemence, which can only be imputed to his impatience in finding that any individual had presumed to disturb the peace of the community. It is remarkable, as showing his utter ignorance of doctrines, which were never intended for discussion among the unbaptized heathen, or the secularized Christian, that, in spite of this bold avowal of the orthodox faith in detail, yet shortly after he explained to Eusebius one of the Nicene declarations, in a sense which even Arius would scarcely have allowed, expressed as it is almost after the manner of Paulus.[a]

Principal Prelates present at the Council.

The first Ecumenical Council met at Nicæa in Bithynia, in the summer of A. D. 325. It was attended by about 300 prelates, chiefly from the eastern provinces of the empire, besides a multitude of priests, deacons, and other functionaries of the Church. Hosius, one of the most eminent men of an age of saints, was president. The prelates who took the principal share in its proceedings, were Alexander of Alexandria, attended by his deacon Athanasius, then about 27 years of age, and soon afterwards his successor in the see; Eustathius, patriarch of Antioch, Macarius of Jerusalem, Cæcilian of Carthage, the object of the hostility of the Donatists, Leontius of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, and Marcellus of Ancyra, whose name was afterwards unhappily notorious

[a] Theod. Hist. i 12.

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in the Church. The number of Arian bishops is variously stated at 13, 17, or 22; the most conspicuous of these being the well known prelates of Nicomedia and Cæsarea, both of whom bore the name of Eusebius.

Its discussions.

The discussions of the Council commenced in the middle of June, and were at first private. Arius was introduced and examined; and confessed his impieties with a plainness and vehemence, far more respectable than the hypocrisy which was the characteristic of his party, and ultimately was adopted by himself. Then followed his disputation with Athanasius, who afterwards engaged Eusebius of Nicomedia, Maris, and Theognis. The unfortunate Marcellus also distinguished himself in the defence of the Catholic doctrine.

The object set before it.

It has sometimes been supposed, that the Council was in doubt for a time, how to discriminate between themselves and the heresy; but the discussions of the last chapter contain sufficient evidence, that the Nicene Fathers had rather to reconcile themselves to a formula which expedience suggested, and to the use of it as a test, than to discover a means of ejecting or subduing their opponents. In the very beginning of the controversy, Eusebius of Nicomedia had declared, that he would not admit the ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας as an attribute of our Lord.[a] A letter containing a similar avowal was read at the Council, and served to set distinctly before the assembled prelates the objects for which they had met; viz. to ascertain the extent of danger accruing to the Church from the Arian innovations; to protest against them, and take measures for putting a stop to them; and to overcome their own reluctance to the public adoption of a word, in explanation of the true doctrine, which was not found in Scripture, had actually been perverted in the previous century to an heretical meaning, and was in consequence forbidden by the Antiochene Council which condemned Paulus.

Conduct of the Arians.

The Arian party, on the other hand, anxious to avoid a test, which they had committed themselves in condemning, presented a creed of their own, drawn up by Eusebius of Cæsarea. Though the words ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας or ὁμοούσιος were omitted, every term of honour and dignity, short of these, was bestowed therein upon the Son of God; Who was designated as the Logos of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only-begotten Son, the First-born of the whole creation, made of the Father before all worlds, and the Instrument of creating them. The Three Persons were confessed to be in real existence, (i. e. in opposition to Sabellianism,) and to be ἀληθινῶς, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Catholics saw very clearly, that concessions of this kind on the part of the

[a] Theod. Hist. i. 6.

NOTE on Page 145.

The original Nicene Creed is here subjoined, as contained in Socr. Hist. i 8.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα θεὸν, πατέρα παντοκράτορα, πάντων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀοράτων ποιητήν.

Καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον ἰησοῦν χριστὸν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ· γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μονογενῆ· τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς, θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ καὶ φῶς ἐκ φωτὸς, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ· γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί· δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τά τε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ. Δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα, καὶ σαρκωθέντα, καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα· παθόντα, καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, ἐρχόμενον κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς.

Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.

Τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας, ὅτι ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν· καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν· καὶ ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο· ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας φάσκοντας εἶναι· ἢ κτιστὸν, ἢ τρεπτὸν, ἢ ἀλλοιωτὸν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ· ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ἁγία καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία

Arians, did but conceal the real question in dispute. Orthodox as were the terms employed by them, naturally and satisfactorily as they would have answered the purposes of a test, had the existing questions never been agitated, and consistent as they were with certain produceable statements of the Ante-Nicene writers, they were irrelevant at a time, when evasions had been found for them all, and triumphantly proclaimed. The plain question was, whether our Lord was God in as full a sense as the Father, though not to be viewed as separable from Him; or whether, as the sole alternative, He was a creature; i. e. whether He was literally of, and in, the one Indivisible Essence which we adore as God, ὁμοούσιος Θεῷ, or of a substance which had a beginning. The Arians said that He was a creature, the Catholics that He was very God; and all the subtleties of the most fertile ingenuity could not alter, and could but hide, this fundamental difference. A specimen of the Arian argumentation at the Council has already been given on the testimony of Athanasius; happily it was not successful. A creed was composed by Hosius, containing the discriminating terms of orthodoxy; and anathemas were added against all who introduced the heretical formulæ, Arius and his immediate followers being mentioned by name. In order to prevent misapprehension of the sense in which the test was used, explanations accompanied it. Thus carefully defined, it was offered for subscription to the members of the Council; who in consequence bound themselves to excommunicate from their respective bodies, all who actually obtruded upon the Church the unscriptural and novel positions of Arius. As to the laity, they were not required to subscribe any test as the condition of communion; though they were of course exposed to the operation of the anathema, in case they ventured on positive innovations on the rule of faith.

The Homousion.

While the Council took this clear and temperate view of its duties, Constantine acted a part, altogether consistent with his own previous sentiments, and praiseworthy under the circumstances of his defective knowledge. He had followed the proceedings of the assembled prelates with interest, and had neglected no opportunity of impressing upon them the supreme importance of securing the peace of the Church. On the opening of the Council, he had set the example of conciliation, by burning publicly without reading certain charges, which had been presented to him against some of its members; a noble act, as conveying a lesson to all present to repress every private feeling, and to deliberate for the well-being of the Church Catholic to the end of time. Such was his behaviour, while the question in controversy was still pending; but, when the decision was once announced, his tone altered, and what had been a recommendation of caution.

Conduct of Constantine.

at once became an injunction to conform. Opposition to the sentence of the Church was considered as disobedience to the civil authority; the prospect of banishment was proposed as the alternative of subscription; and it was not long before seven of the thirteen dissentient Bishops submitted to the pressure of the occasion, and accepted the creed with its anathemas as articles of peace.

Submission of the Arians.

Indeed, the position in which Eusebius of Nicomedia had placed their cause, rendered it difficult for them consistently to refuse subscription. The violence, with which Arius originally assailed the Catholics, had been succeeded by an affected earnestness for unity and concord, so soon as his favour at Court allowed him to dispense with the low popularity, by which he first rose into notice. The insignificancy of the points in dispute, which had lately been the very ground of complaint with him and his party against the particular Church which condemned them, became an argument for yielding, when the other Churches of Christendom confirmed the sentence of the Alexandrian. It is said, that some of them substituted the ὁμοιούσιον for the ὁμοούσιον in the confessions which they presented to the Council; but it is unsafe to trust the Anomœan Philostorgius, on whose authority the report rests,[a] in a charge against the Eusebian party, and perhaps after all he merely means, that they explained the latter by the former as an excuse for their own recantation. The six, who remained unpersuaded, had raised an objection, which the explanations set forth by the Council had gone to obviate, on the alleged materialism of the word which had been selected as the test. At length four of them gave way; and the other two, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and another, withdrawing their opposition to the ὁμοούσιον, only refused to sign the condemnation of Arius. These, however, were at length released from their difficulty, by the submission of the heresiarch himself; who was pardoned on the understanding, that he never returned to the Church, which had suffered so much from his intrigues. There is, however, some difficulty in this part of the history. Eusebius shortly afterwards suffered a temporary exile, on a detection of his former practices with Licinius to the injury of Constantine; and Arius, apparently involved in his ruin, was banished with his followers into Illyria.

[a] Philost i. 9.

SECTION II.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE NICENE COUNCIL.

CHAP. III. SECT. II.

The Eusebians a political faction.

FROM the time that the Eusebians consented to subscribe the Homoousion in accordance with the wishes of a heathen prince, they became nothing better than a political party. They soon learned, indeed, to call themselves Homœusians, or believers in the Homoiousion, as if they still held the peculiarities of a religious creed; but in truth it is an abuse of language to say, that they had any belief at all. For this reason, the account of the Homœusian or Semi-arian doctrine shall be postponed, till such time as we fall in with individuals, whom we may believe to be serious in their professions, and to act under the influence of religious convictions however erroneous. Here the Eusebians must be described as a secular faction, which is the true character of them in the history in which they bear a part.

In what sense the Church a political power.

Strictly speaking, the Christian Church, as being a visible society, is necessarily a political power or party. It may be a party triumphant, or a party under persecution; but a party it always must be, prior in existence to the civil institutions with which it is surrounded, and from its latent divinity formidable and influential, even to the end of time. The grant of permanency was made in the beginning, not to the mere doctrine of the Gospel, but to the Association itself built upon the doctrine;[a] in prediction, not only of the indestructibility of Christianity, but of the medium also through which it was to be manifested to the world. Thus the Ecclesiastical Body is a divinely-appointed means, towards realizing the great evangelical blessings. Christians depart from their duty, or become in an offensive sense *political*, not when they act as members of one community, but when they do so for *temporal* ends or in an *illegal* manner; not when they assume the attitude of a party, but when they split into many. If the primitive believers did not interfere with the acts of the civil government, it was merely because they had no civil rights enabling them legally to do so. But where they have rights, the case is different;[b] and the existence of a secular spirit is to be ascertained, not by their using these, but their using them for ends short of those for which they were given. Doubtless in criticising the mode of their exercising them in a particular case, differences of opinion may fairly exist; but the principle itself, the duty of using their civil rights in the service of religion, is clear; and since there is a popular

[a] Matt xvi. 18.

[b] Acts xvi 37—39

misconception, that Christians, and especially the Clergy, as such, have no concern in temporal affairs, it is expedient to take every opportunity of formally denying the position, and demanding proof of it. In truth, the Church was framed for the express purpose of interfering, or, (as irreligious men will say,) meddling with the world. It is the plain duty of its members, not only to associate internally, but also to develope that internal union in an external warfare with the spirit of evil, whether in Kings' courts or among the mixed multitude; and, if they can do nothing else, at least they can suffer for the truth, and remind men of it, by inflicting on them the task of persecution.

Review of the conduct of the heretical party

1. These principles being assumed, it is easy to enter into the relative positions of the Catholics and Arians, at the era under consideration. Of the Catholics more presently; first, let us dwell on the conduct of the Arians. It is a matter of fact, that they commenced their career with the deliberate commission of disorderly and schismatical acts; and it is a clear inference from their subsequent proceedings, that they did so for private ends. For both reasons, then, they were a mere political faction, usurping the name of religion; and, as such, essentially anti-christian. It is not here debated, whether their doctrine was right or wrong; but, whether they did not make it a secondary object of their exertions, an instrument towards attaining ends, which they valued above it Now it will be found, that the party was prior to the creed. They grafted their heresy on the schism of the Meletians, who continued to support them after they had published it: and they readily abandoned it, when their secular interests required the sacrifice. At the Council of Nicæa, they began by maintaining an erroneous doctrine; they ended by concessions which implied the further heresy, that points of faith are of no importance; and, if they were odious when they blasphemed the truth, they were still more odious when they confessed it. It was the very principle of Eclecticism to make light of differences in belief; while it was involved in the primary notion of a revelation that these differences were of importance, and it was taught with plainness in the Gospel, that to join with those who denied the right faith was a sin.

The suppleness of the Eusebians recommends them to Constantine.

This adoption, however, on the part of the Eusebians, of the dreams of Pagan philosophy, served in some sort as a recommendation of them to a prince, who, from education and knowledge of the world, was especially tempted to consider all truth as a theory, which was not realized in a present tangible form. Accordingly, when once they had rid themselves of the mortification caused by their forced subscription, they had the gratification of finding themselves the most powerful party in the Church, as being the representative and organ of

the Emperor's sentiments. They then at once changed places with the Catholics; who sustained a double defeat, both in the continued power of those whom they had hoped to exclude from the Church, and again, in the invidiousness of their own unrelenting suspicion and dislike of men, who had seemed by subscription to satisfy all reasonable doubt respecting their orthodoxy.

Their leaders. Eusebius of Nicomedia.

The Arian party was fortunate, moreover, in its leaders; one the most dexterous politician, the other the most accomplished theologian of the age. Eusebius of Nicomedia was a Lucianist, the fellow-disciple of Arius. He was originally Bishop of Berytus, in Phœnicia; but, having gained the confidence of Constantia, sister to Constantine, and wife to Licinius, he was by her influence translated to Nicomedia, where the Eastern Court then resided. Here he secretly engaged in behalf of Licinius against his rival, and is even reported to have been indifferent to the security of the Christians during the persecution which followed; a charge, which certainly derives some confirmation from Alexander's circular epistle, in which the Arians are accused of directing the violence of the civil power against the orthodox of Alexandria. On the ruin of Licinius, he was skreened by Constantia from the resentment of the conqueror; and, being recommended by his polished manners and shrewd and persuasive talent, he soon contrived to gain an influence over the mind of Constantine himself. From the time that Arius had recourse to him on his flight from Palestine, he is to be accounted the real head of the heretical party; and his influence is quickly discernible in the change, which ensued, in its language and conduct. While a courteous tone was assumed towards the defenders of the orthodox doctrine, the subtleties of dialectics, in which the sect excelled, were used, not in attacking, but in deceiving its opponents, in embellishing unbelief, and obliterating the distinctive marks of the true creed. It must not be forgotten that it was from Nicomedia, the see of Eusebius, that Constantine wrote his epistle to Alexander and Arius.

Eusebius of Cæsarea.

In supporting Arianism in its new direction, the other Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, was of singular service. This distinguished writer, to whom the Christian world has so great a debt at the present day, though not characterized by the unprincipled ambition of his namesake, is unhappily connected in history with the Arian party. He seems to have had the faults and the virtues of the mere man of letters: strongly excited neither to good nor to evil, and careless at once of the cause of truth and the prizes of secular greatness, in comparison of the comforts and decencies of literary ease. His first master was Dorotheus, of Antioch;[a] afterwards he

[a] Danz. de Eus. Cæsar. 22.

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became a pupil of the School of Cæsarea, which seems to have been his birth-place, and where Origen had taught. Here he studied the works of that great master, and the other writers of the Alexandrian school. It does not appear, when he first began to arianize. At Cæsarea he is celebrated as the friend of the orthodox Pamphilus, afterwards martyred, whom he assisted in his defence of Origen, in answer to the charges of heterodoxy then in circulation against him. The first book of this work is still extant in the Latin translation of Ruffinus, and its statements of the Catholic doctrines are altogether explicit and accurate. In his own writings, numerous as they are, there is very little which fixes on Eusebius any charge, beyond that of an attachment to the Platonic phraseology. Had he not connected himself with the Arian party, it would have been unjust to have suspected him of heresy. But his acts are his confession. He openly sided with those, whose blasphemies a true Christian would have abhorred; and he sanctioned and shared their deeds of violence and injustice perpetrated on the Catholics.

An Eclectic in spirit and conduct.

But it is a different reason which has led to the mention of Eusebius in this connection. The grave accusation, under which he lies, is not that of arianizing, but of corrupting the simplicity of the Gospel with an Eclectic spirit. While he held out the ambiguous language of the schools as a refuge, and the Alexandrian imitation of it as an argument, against the pursuit of the orthodox, his conduct gave countenance to the secular maxim, that difference in creeds is a matter of inferior moment, and that, provided we confess as far as the very terms of Scripture, we may speculate as philosophers, and live as the world. A more dangerous adviser Constantine could hardly have selected, than a man thus variously gifted, thus exalted in the Church, thus disposed towards the very errors against which he required especially to be guarded. The remark has been made, that, throughout his Ecclesiastical History, no instance occurs of his expressing abhorrence of the superstitions of paganism, and that his custom is either to praise, or not to blame, such heretical writers as fall under his notice.[a]

Connexion of Julian with the Eusebians.

In this association of the Eusebian with the Eclectic doctrines, it must not be forgotten, that Julian the Apostate was the pupil of the Bishop of Nicomedia, his kinsman; that he took part with the Arians against the Catholics; and that, in one of his extant epistles, he speaks in praise of the writings of a partizan of the former, George of Laodicea.[b]

[a] Kestner de Euseb. Auctor. prolegom. § 17. Yet it must be confessed he is strongly opposed to γοητεία in all its forms, i. e. as being unworthy a philosopher.

[b] Weisman, sec. iv. 35, § 12.

Influence of the Court.

Nor must the influence of the Court pass unnoticed, in recounting the means by which Arianism secured a hold over the mind of the Emperor. Constantia, his favourite sister, was the original patroness of Eusebius of Nicomedia; and thus a princess, whose name would otherwise be dignified by her misfortunes, is known to Christians of later times, only as a principal instrument of the success of heresy. Wrought upon by a creature of the Bishop's, who was in her confidence, she summoned Constantine to her bed-side in her last illness, begged him as her parting request, to extend his favour to the Arians, and especially commended to his regard the presbyter himself, who had stimulated her to this experiment on the feelings of a brother. The dependants * of the Imperial Court imitated her in her preference for the polite and smooth demeanour of the Eusebian prelates, which was advantageously contrasted to the stern simplicity of the Catholics. The eunuchs and slaves of the palace strongly † embraced the tenets of Arianism; and all the most light-minded and frivolous of mankind allowed themselves to abuse the solemn subject in controversy, into matter for fashionable conversation or literary amusement.

Adulation of the Eusebians towards the Emperor.

The arts of flattery completed the triumph of the heretical party. So many are the temptations, to which monarchs are exposed, of forgetting that they are men, that it is obviously the duty of the Episcopal Order to remind them, that there is a visible Power in the world, divinely founded and protected, superior to their own. But Eusebius places himself at the feet of a heathen; and forgetful of his own ordination-grace, allows the Emperor to style himself "the Bishop of paganism," and "the predestined Apostle of virtue to all men." [a] The shrine of the Church was thrown open to his inspection; and, contrary to the spirit of Christianity, its mysteries were officiously explained to one who was not yet even a candidate for baptism. The restoration and erection of Churches, which is the honorable distinction of his reign, assimilated him, in the minds of his courtiers, to the Divine Founder and Priest of the invisible temple; and the magnificence, which soothed the vanity of a monarch, seemed in its charitable uses almost a substitute for personal religion.[b]

Feelings and position of the Catholics.

2. While events thus gradually worked for the secular advancement of the heretical party, the Catholics were allotted gratifications and anxieties of a higher character. The proceedings of the Council had detected the paucity of the Arians among the Rulers of the Church; which had been the more clearly ascertained, inasmuch as no temporal interests

* [Ed. defendants.] † [Ed. strangely.]

a Euseb. vit. Const. iii. 58. iv. 24 Vide also i. 4. 24.

b Ibid. iv. 22, and alibi. vid. Gibbon. ch. xx.

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had operated to gain for the orthodox cause that vast preponderance of advocates, which it had actually obtained. Moreover, it had confirmed by the combined evidence of the universal Church, the argument from Scripture and local tradition, which each separate Christian community already possessed. And there was a satisfaction in having found a formula, adequate to the preservation of the all-important article in controversy in all its purity. On the other hand, in spite of these immediate causes of congratulation, the fortunes of the Church were clouded in prospect, by the Emperor's adoption of its Creed as a formula of peace, not of belief, and by the ready subscription of the unprincipled faction, which had previously objected to it. This immediate failure, which not unfrequently attends beneficial measures in their commencement, issued, as has been said, in the temporary triumph of the Arians. The disease, which had called for the Council, instead of being expelled from the system, was thrown back upon the Church, and for a time afflicted it;[a] nor was it cast out, except by the persevering prayer and fasting of the oppressed believers. Meanwhile, the Catholic prelates could but retire from the Court party, and carefully watch its movements; and in consequence, incurred the reproach and the penalty of being "troublers of Israel." This may be illustrated from the subsequent history of Arius himself, with which this chapter shall close.

Attempt to restore Arius to the Church.

It is doubtful, whether or not Arius was persuaded to sign the symbol at the Nicene Council; but at least he professed to receive it about five years afterwards. At this time Eusebius had been restored to the favour of Constantine; who, on the other hand, influenced by his sister, had become less zealous in his adherence to the orthodox side of the controversy. An attempt was made by the friends of Arius, to effect his restoration to Alexandria. The great Athanasius was at this time Primate of Egypt; and in his instance the question was tried, whether or not the Church would adopt the secular principles, to which the Arians were willing to subject it, and abandon its faith, as the condition of gaining present peace and prosperity. He was already known as the counsellor of Alexander in the previous controversy; yet, Eusebius did not at once give up the hope of gaining him by persuasion, which was enforced by his recent triumph over the orthodox prelates of Antioch, Gaza, and Hadrianople, whom he had found means to deprive of their sees to make way for Arians. Failing in his attempt at conciliation, he pursued the policy which might have been anticipated, and accused the Bishop of Alexandria of a youthful rashness, and

[a] Theod. Hist. i. 6. fin

an obstinate contentious spirit, incompatible with the good understanding which ought to subsist among Christians. Arius was summoned to court, presented an ambiguous confession, and was favourably received by Constantine. Thence he was dispatched to Alexandria, and was quickly followed by an imperial injunction addressed to Athanasius, in order to secure the reception of the former in the Church to which he belonged. "On being informed of my pleasure," says Constantine, in the fragment of the epistle preserved by Athanasius, "give free admission to all, who are desirous of entering into communion with the Church. For if I learn of your standing in the way of any who were seeking it, or interdicting them, . . . I will send at once those who shall depose you in stead, by my authority, and banish you from your see."[a] It was not to be supposed, that Athanasius would yield to an order, though from his sovereign, which was conceived in such ignorance of the principles of Church communion, and the powers of its Rulers; and, on his explanation, the Emperor professed himself well satisfied, that he should use his own discretion in the matter. The intrigues of the Eusebians, which followed, shall elsewhere be related; they ended in effecting the banishment of Athanasius into Gaul, the restoration of Arius at a Council held at Jerusalem, his return to Alexandria, and, when the anger of the intractable populace against him broke out into a tumult, his recal to Constantinople to give further explanations respecting his real opinions.

Solemn declaration of Arius.

There the last and memorable scene of his history took place, and furnishes a fresh illustration of the clearness and integrity, with which the Catholics maintained the true principles of Church union, against those who would have sacrificed truth to peace. The aged Alexander, bishop of the see, underwent a persecution of entreaties and threats, such as had already been employed against Athanasius. The Eusebians urged upon him, by way of warning, their fresh successes over the Bishops of Ancyra and Alexandria; and appointed a day, by which he was to admit Arius to the holy communion, or to be ejected from his see. Constantine confirmed this alternative. At first, indeed, he had been struck with doubts respecting the sincerity of Arius; but, on the latter professing with an oath that his tenets were orthodox, and presenting a confession, in which the terms of Scripture were made the vehicle of his own impieties, he dismissed his scruples, observing with an anxiety and seriousness which rise above his ordinary character, that "Arius had well sworn if his words had no double meaning; otherwise, GOD WOULD

[a] Athan Apol. cont. Arian 59.

AVENGE." The miserable man did not hesitate to swear, that he professed the Creed of the Catholic Church without reservation, and that he had never said nor thought otherwise, than according to the statements which he now made.

Death of Arius.

For seven days previous to that appointed for his readmission, the Church of Constantinople, Bishop and people, were given up to fasting and prayer. Alexander, after a vain endeavour to move the Emperor, had recourse to the most solemn and extraordinary form of anathema allowed in the Church;[a] and with tears besought its Divine Guardian, either to take himself out of the world, or to remove thence the instrument of the extended and increasing spiritual evils, with which Christendom was darkening. On the evening before the day of his proposed triumph, Arius passed through the streets of the city with his party, in an ostentatious manner; when the stroke of death suddenly seized him, and he expired before his danger was discovered.

Reflexions upon it.

Under the circumstances, a thoughtful mind cannot but account this as one of those remarkable interpositions of power, by which Divine Providence urges on the consciences of men in the natural course of things, what their reason from the first acknowledges, that He is not indifferent to human conduct. To say that these do not fall within the ordinary course of His governance, is merely to say that they *are* judgments; which, in the common meaning of the word, stand for events extraordinary and unexpected. That such do take place under the Christian dispensation, is sufficiently proved by the history of Ananias and Sapphira. It is remarkable too, that the similar occurrences, which happen at the present day, are generally connected with some unusual perjury or extreme blasphemy; and, though we may not infer the sin from the circumstance of the temporal affliction, yet, the commission of the sin being ascertained, we may well account, that its guilt is divinely impressed on the minds, and enlarged in the estimation of the multitude, by the visible suffering by which it is followed. Nor do we in such cases necessarily pass any general sentence upon the individual, who appears to be the object of Divine Visitation; but merely upon the particular act which provoked it, and which has its fearful character of evil stamped upon it, independent of the punishment which draws our attention to it. The man of God, who prophesied against the altar in Bethel, is not to be regarded by the light of his last act, though a judgment followed it, but according to the general tenor of his life. Arius also must thus be viewed; though, unhappily, his closing deed is but the seal of a prevaricating and presumptuous career.

[a] Bingham Antiq. xvi. 2. §. 17.

Athanasius, who is one of the authorities from whom the foregoing account is taken, received it from Macarius, a presbyter of the Church of Constantinople, who was there at the time. He adds, "while the Church was rejoicing at the deliverance, Alexander administered the communion in pious and orthodox form, praying with all the brethren, and glorifying God greatly; not as if rejoicing over his death, (God forbid! for to all men it is appointed once to die,) but because in this event there was displayed somewhat more than a human judgment. For the Lord Himself, judging between the threats of the Eusebians, and the prayer of Alexander, has in this given sentence against the heresy of the Arians; showing it to be unworthy of ecclesiastical fellowship, and manifesting to all, that though it have the patronage of emperor and people, yet that by the Church itself it is condemned."[a]

[a] Epist. ad Serap. 4.

CHAPTER IV.

COUNCILS IN THE REIGN OF CONSTANTIUS.

SECTION I.

THE EUSEBIANS.

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Eusebian proceedings after the death of Arius.

THE death of Arius was productive of no important consequences in the history of his party. They had never deferred to him as their leader, and since the Nicene Council had even abandoned his creed. The theology of the Eclectics had opened to Eusebius of Cæsarea a language less obnoxious to the Catholics and Constantine, than that into which he had been betrayed in Palestine; while his namesake, possessing the confidence of the Emperor, was enabled to wield weapons more decisive in the controversy than those which Arius had used. From that time Semi-arianism was their professed doctrine, and slanderous accusations the means adopted by them for the overthrow and deposition of the Catholic prelates. This is the character of their proceedings from A.D. 328 to A.D 350; when circumstances led them to adopt a third creed, and enabled them to support it by open force.

They oppose the Catholic mystery through pride.

It may at first sight excite our surprise, that men who were so little careful to be consistent in their professions of faith, should be at the pains to find evasions for a test, which they might have subscribed as a matter of course, and then dismissed from their thoughts. But, not to mention the natural desire of maintaining an opposition, when men have once committed themselves to it, and especially after a defeat, there is that in religious mysteries, which is ever distasteful to secular minds. The marvellous, which is sure to excite the impatience and resentment of the baffled reason, becomes insupportable when found in those solemn topics, which it would fain look upon, as necessary indeed for the uneducated, but irrelevant when addressed to those, who are already skilled in the knowledge and the superficial decencies of virtue. The difficulties of science may be dismissed from the mind, and virtually forgotten: the precepts of morality, imperative as they are,

may be received with the condescension, and applied with the modifications, of a self-applauding refinement. But what at once commands attention, yet refuses to satisfy the curiosity, places itself above the human mind, imprints on it the thought of Him Who is eternal, and enforces the necessity of obedience for its own sake. And thus it becomes to the proud and irreverent, what the consciousness of guilt is to the sinner; a spectre haunting the scenes, and disturbing the complacency of their intellectual contemplations.—In this at least, throughout their changes, the Eusebians are consistent; in their hatred of the sacred mystery.

It has sometimes been scornfully said, on the other hand, that the zeal of Christians, in the discussion of theological subjects, has increased with the mysteriousness of the doctrine in dispute. There is no reason why we should shrink from the avowal. Doubtless, a subject that is dear to us, does become more deeply fixed in our affections by its very peculiarities and incidental obscurities. We desire to revere what we already love; and we seek for the materials of reverence in such parts of it, as exceed our intelligence or imagination. It should therefore excite our devout gratitude, to reflect how the truth has been revealed to us in Scripture in the most practical manner; so as both to humble and to win over, while it consoles, those who really love it. It must be recollected too, in reference to the particular mystery under consideration, that, a belief in our Lord's Divinity being closely connected, (how, it matters not,) with right moral feeling generally,—involving a due sense both of our need and of the value of the blessings which He has procured for us, and an emancipation from the tyranny of the visible world,—it is no wonder, that those, who look for the image of God in things seen, should dislike to hear of His true and only Representative. If the unbeliever has attempted to account for the rise of the doctrine, by the alleged natural growth of a veneration for the Person and acts of the Redeemer, let it at least be allowed to Christians to reverse the process of argument, and to maintain rather, that a low estimation of the evangelical blessings leads to unworthy conceptions of the Author of them. In the case of laymen it will show itself in a neglect of the subject of religion altogether; while churchmen, on whose minds religion is forced, are tempted either to an undue exaltation of their order, or to a creed dishonourable to their Lord. The Eusebians adopted the latter alternative, and so merged the supremacy of Divine truth amid the multifarious religions and philosophies of the world.

through love of disputation.

Their skilfulness in reasoning and love of disputation afford us an additional explanation of their pertinacious opposition to the Nicene Creed. Though, in possessing the favour

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of the Imperial Court, they had already the substantial advantages of victory, they disdained success without a battle. They loved the excitement of suspense, and the triumph of conquest. And this sophistical turn of mind accounts, not only for their incessant wranglings, but for their frequent changes of view, as regards the doctrine in dispute. It may be doubted. whether men, so practised in the gymnastics of the Aristotelic school, *could* carefully develope and consistently maintain a definite view of doctrine; especially in a case, where the difficulties of an unsound cause combined with their own habitual restlessness and levity to defeat the attempt. Accordingly, in the conduct of the argument, they seem to aim at nothing beyond "living from hand to mouth," as the saying is; availing themselves of some or other expedient, which would suffice to carry them through existing difficulties; admissions, e. g. to satisfy the timid conscience of Constantius, or to deceive the Western Church; or statements so faintly precise and so decently ambiguous, as to embrace the greatest number of opinions, and deprive religion, as far as possible, of its austere and commanding aspect.

The principal Eusebians.

That I may not seem to be indulging in vague accusation, I here present the reader with a sketch of the lives of the chief of them; from which he will be able to decide, whether the above explanation of their conduct is unnecessary or gratuitous.

Acacius of Cæsarea.

The most distinguished of the party, after Eusebius himself, for ability, learning, and unscrupulousness, was Acacius, the successor of the other Eusebius in the see of Cæsarea. He had been his pupil, and on his death inherited his library. Jerome ranks him among the most learned commentators on Scripture. The Arian historian, Philostorgius, celebrates his boldness, penetration, and perspicuity in unfolding his views: and Sozomen speaks of his talents and influence as equal to the execution of the most difficult designs.[a] He began at first with professing himself a Semi-arian after the example of Eusebius, his master; next, he became the founder of the party, which will presently be described as the Homœan; thirdly, he joined himself to the Anomœans or pure Arians, so as even to be the intimate associate of the wretched Aetius; fourthly, at the command of Constantius, he deserted and excommunicated him: fifthly, in the reign of the Catholic Jovian, he signed the Homoousion or symbol of Nicæa.

George of Laodicæa.

George, of Laodicæa, another of the leading members of the Eusebian party, was originally a presbyter of the Alexandrian Church, and deposed by Alexander for the assistance afforded by him to Arius at Nicomedia. At the end of the reign of

[a] Tillemont, Mem vol. vi. des Ariens, § 28

Constantius, he professed for a while the sentiments of the Semi-arians; whether seriously or not, we have not the means of deciding, although the character given of him by Athanasius, who is generally candid in his judgments, is unfavourable to his sincerity. Certainly he deserted the Semi-arians in no long time, and died an Anomœan. He is accused of open and habitual irregularities in his mode of life.

Leontius of Antioch.

Leontius, the most crafty of his party, was promoted by the Arians to the see of Antioch;[a] and though a pupil of the school of Lucian, and consistently attached to the opinions of Arius to the end of his life, he conducted himself in it with great moderation and good temper. The Catholic party was at that time still strong in the city, particularly among the laity; the crimes of Stephen and Placillus, his immediate Arian predecessors, had brought discredit on the heretical cause; and the theological opinions of Constantius, who was attached to the Semi-arian doctrine, rendered it dangerous to avow the plain blasphemies of the first founder of their creed. Accordingly, with the view of seducing the Catholics to his own communion, he was anxious to profess an agreement with the Church, even where he held an opposite opinion; and in the public doxology, which was practically the test of faith, not even the nearest to him in the congregation could hear from him more than the words "for ever and ever," with which it concludes. It was apparently with the same design, that he converted the almshouses of the city, destined for the reception of strangers, into seminaries for propagating the Christian faith; and published a panegyrical account of St. Babylas, when his body was to be removed to Daphne, by way of consecrating a place which had been before devoted to sensual excesses. In the meanwhile, he gradually weakened the Church, by a systematic promotion of heretical, and a discountenance of the orthodox Clergy; one of his most abominable acts being his ordination of Aetius, the founder of the Anomœans, who was afterwards promoted to the episcopacy in the reign of Julian.

Eudoxius of Constantinople.

Eudoxius, the successor of Leontius, in the see of Antioch, was his fellow-pupil in the school of Lucian. He is said to have been converted to Semi-arianism by the writings of the Sophist Asterius; but he afterwards joined the Anomœans, and got possession of the patriarchate of Constantinople. It was there at the dedication of the cathedral of St. Sophia, that he uttered the wanton impiety, which has characterized him with a distinctness, which supersedes all historical notice of his conduct, or discussion of his religious opinions. "When

[a] A strange and scandalous transaction in early life, gave him the appellation of ὁ ἀπόκοπος. Athan. ad Monach 4.

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Eudoxius," says Socrates, "had taken his seat on the episcopal throne, his first words were these celebrated ones, 'the Father is ἀσεβὴς, irreligious; the Son εὐσεβὴς, religious.' When a noise and confusion ensued, he added, 'Be not distressed at what I say; for the Father is irreligious, as worshipping none; but the Son is religious towards the Father.' On this the tumult ceased, and in its place an intemperate laughter seized the congregation; and it remains as a good saying even to this time."[a] There can be no indiscretion in translating a blasphemy, which can excite no other feelings but those of horror and indignation.

Valens of Mursa

Valens, Bishop of Mursa, in Pannonia, shall close this list of Eusebian Prelates. He was one of the immediate disciples of Arius; and, from an early age, the champion of his heresy in the Latin Church. In the conduct of the controversy, he inherited more of the plain dealing as well as of the principles of his master, than his associates; was an open advocate of the Anomœan doctrine, and by his personal influence with Constantius balanced the power of the Semi-arian party, derived from the Emperor's private attachment to their doctrine. The favour of Constantius was gained by a fortunate artifice, at the time the latter was directing his arms against the tyrant Magnentius. "While the two armies were engaged in the plains of Mursa," says Gibbon, "and the fate of the two rivals depended on the chance of war, the son of Constantine passed the anxious moments in a church of the martyrs, under the walls of the city. His spiritual comforter, Valens, the Arian Bishop of the diocese, employed the most artful precautions to obtain such early intelligence, as might secure either his favour or his escape. A secret chain of swift and trusty messengers informed him of the vicissitudes of the battle; and while the courtiers stood trembling around their affrighted master, Valens assured him that the Gallic legions gave way; and insinuated, with some presence of mind, that the glorious event had been revealed to him by an angel. The grateful Emperor ascribed his success to the merits and intercession to the Bishop of Mursa, whose faith had deserved the public and miraculous approbation of Heaven."[b]

Their resemblance to Paulus.

Such were the leaders of the Eusebian faction; and on the review of them, do we not seem to see in each a fresh exhibition of their great type and forerunner, Paulus, on one side or other of his character; though surpassing him in extravagance of conduct, as possessing a wider field, and more powerful incentives for ambitious and energetic exertion? We see the same accommodation of their creed to the humour of an earthly Sovereign, the same fertility of disputation in support of it,

[a] Socr. Hist. ii 43. [b] Gibbon. Hist. ch. xxi.

the same reckless profanation of things sacred, the same patient dissemination of error for the services of the age after them; and, if they are free from the personal immoralities of their master, they balance this favourable trait of character by the cruel and hard-hearted temper, which discovers itself in their persecution of the Catholics.

Beginnings of the Arian persecution.

This persecution was conducted during the reign of Constantine according to the outward forms of ecclesiastical law. Charges of various kinds were preferred in Council against the orthodox prelates of the principal sees. with a profession at least of regularity, whatever unfairness there might be in the details of the proceedings. By this means all the most powerful Churches of Eastern Christendom were brought under the influence of the Arians; who, in the beginning of the reign of Constantius, were in possession of those of Constantinople, Heraclea, Hadrianople, Ephesus, Ancyra, both Cæsareas, Antioch, Laodicea, and Alexandria.—Eustathius of Antioch had incurred their hatred, by his strenuous resistance to the heresy in the very place of its birth. Following the example of his immediate predecessor Philogonius, he refused communion to Stephen, Leontius, Eudoxius, George, and others; and accused Eusebius of Cæsarea openly of having violated the faith of Nicæa. The heads of the party assembled in Council at Antioch; and, on charges of heresy and immorality, which they professed to be satisfactorily maintained, pronounced sentence of deposition against him. Constantine banished him to Philippi, together with a considerable number of priests and deacons of his Church. Marcellus of Ancyra, another of their inveterate opponents, was deposed, anathematized, and banished by them, with greater appearance of justice, on the ground of his leaning to the errors of Sabellius. But their most rancorous enmity and most persevering efforts were directed against the high-minded Patriarch of Alexandria; and, in illustration of the principles which governed them, the history of his first persecution shall here be related somewhat at length.

Eustathius.

Marcellus.

Athanasius

Eusebians gain the Meletians of Egypt.

When Eusebius of Nicomedia failed to effect the restoration of Arius into the Alexandrian Church by persuasion, he had threatened to gain his end by harsher means. Calumnies were easily invented against the prelate who had withstood his purpose; and it so happened, that willing tools were found on the spot for conducting the attack. The Meletian sectaries have already been noticed, as being the original associates of Arius; who had troubled the Church by taking part in the schism, before he promulgated his peculiar heresy. They were called after Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis in the Thebaid; who, being deposed for lapsing in the Dioclesian persecution, separated from the Catholics; and, propagating a spurious succession of

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clergy by his episcopal prerogative, formed a powerful body in the heart of the Egyptian Church. The Council of Nicæa, desirous of terminating the disorder in the most temperate manner, instead of deposing the Meletian bishops, had arranged, that they should retain a titular rank in the sees, in which they had respectively placed themselves; while, by forbidding them to exercise their episcopal functions, it provided for the termination of the schism at their death. But, with the bad fortune which commonly attends conciliatory measures, unless accompanied by such a display of vigour as shows that concession is but condescension, the clemency was forgotten in the restriction, which irritated, without repressing them; and, being bent on the overthrow of the dominant Church, they made a sacrifice of their principles, which had hitherto been orthodox, and joined the Eusebians. By this intrigue, the latter gained an entrance into the Egyptian Church, such as had already been opened to them, by means of their heresy itself, in the Syrian and Asian provinces.[a]

Prior charges against Athanasius.

Charges against Athanasius were produced and examined in Councils successively held at Cæsarea and Tyre (A. D. 333—335); the Meletians being the accusers, and the Eusebians the judges in the trial. At an earlier date, it had been attempted to convict him of political offences; but, on examination, Constantine became satisfied of his innocence. It had been represented, that, of his own authority, he had imposed and rigorously exacted a duty upon the Egyptian linen cloth; the pretended tribute being in fact nothing beyond the offerings, which pious persons had made to the Church, in the shape of vestments for the service of the sanctuary. It had moreover been alleged, that he had sent pecuniary aid to one Philumenus, who was in rebellion against the Emperor. At a later period they accused him of a design of distressing Constantinople, by stopping the corn vessels of Alexandria, destined for the supply of the metropolis.

Charges at the Councils of Cæsarea and Tyre.

The charges brought against him before the Council were of a civil or ecclesiastical character; first, that he, or Macarius, one of his deacons, had broken a consecrated chalice, and the holy table itself, and had thrown the sacred books into the fire; and secondly, that he had killed Arsenius, a Meletian bishop, whose hand, amputated and preserved for magical purposes, had been found in the Primate's house. The latter of these strange accusations was refuted at the Council of

[a] The Meletians, on the other hand, were not in the event equally advantaged by the coalition, for, after the success of their attack upon Athanasius, Constantine, true to his object of restoring tranquillity to the Church, while he banished Athanasius to Treves, banished also John, the leader of the Meletians, who had been forward in procuring his condemnation.

Cæsarea by Arsenius himself, whom Athanasius had gained, and who, on the production of a human hand at the trial, presented himself before the judges, and thus destroyed the circumstantial evidence by which it was to be identified as his. The former charge was exposed at Tyre by the testimony of the Egyptian bishops; who, not only alleged the equivocating evidence of the accuser, but proved that at the place where their Metropolitan was said to have broken the chalice, there was neither church, nor altar, nor chalice, existing. These were the principal allegations brought against him; and their extraordinary absurdity, certain as the charges are as matters of history, from evidence of various kinds, can only be accounted for by supposing, that the Eusebians were even then too powerful and too bold, to care for much more than the bare forms of law, or to scruple at any evidence, which the unskilfulness of their Egyptian coadjutors might set before them. A charge of violent conduct against certain Meletians was added to the above; and, as some say, a still more frivolous accusation of incontinence, but whether this was ever brought, is more than doubtful.

Commission sent to the Mareotis.

Cæsarea and Tyre were places too public even for the audacity of the Eusebians, when the facts of the case were so plainly in favour of the accused. It was now proposed, that a commission of inquiry should be sent to the Mareotis; which was in the neighbourhood, and formed part of the diocese, of Alexandria, and was the scene of the pretended profanation of the sacred chalice. The leading members of this commission were Valens, and Ursacius, Theognis, Maris, and two others, all Eusebians; they took with them the chief accuser of Athanasius as their guide and host, leaving Athanasius and Macarius at Tyre, and refusing admittance to the court to such of the clergy of the Mareotis, as were desirous of defending their Bishop's interests in his absence. The issue of such proceedings may be anticipated. On the return of the commission to Tyre, Athanasius was formally condemned of rebellion, sedition, and a tyrannical use of his episcopal power; of murder, sacrilege, and magic; deposed from the see of Alexandria, and prohibited from ever returning to that city. Constantine confirmed the sentence of the Council, and Athanasius was banished to Gaul.

Athanasius banished into Gaul, rouses the zeal of the West.

It has often been remarked, that persecutions of Christians, as in St. Paul's case, "fall out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel." [a] The dispersion of the disciples, after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, scattered the word of truth with them among the Samaritans; and in the case before us, the exile of Athanasius led to his introduction to the younger Constantine,

[a] Phil. i. 12.

who warmly embraced his cause, and gave him the opportunity of rousing the zeal, and gaining the friendship of the Catholics of the West. Constans also, another son of Constantine, declared in his favour; and thus, on the death of their father which took place two years after the Council of Tyre, one third alone of his power, in the person of the Semi-arian Constantius, remained with that party, which hitherto had prosecuted their designs against the universal Church without the prospect of opposition. The support of the Roman See, was a still more important advantage gained by Athanasius. Rome was the natural mediator between Alexandria and Antioch, and at that time possessed extensive influence among the Churches of the West. Accordingly, when Constantius re-commenced the persecution, to which his father had been persuaded, the exiles betook themselves thither; and about the year 340 or 341 we read of prelates from Thrace, Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine, collected there, besides a multitude of presbyters; and among the former, Athanasius himself, Marcellus, Asclepas of Gaza, and Luke of Hadrianople. The first act of the Roman See in their favour was the holding a provincial Council; in which the charges against Athanasius and Marcellus were examined, and pronounced to be untenable. And the next was to advocate the summoning of a Council of the whole Church with the same purpose; referring it to Athanasius to select a place of meeting, where his cause might be secure of a more impartial hearing than it had met with at Cæsarea and Tyre.

Eusebian Council of the Dedication.

The Eusebians, on the other hand, perceived the danger which their interests would sustain, should a Council be held at any distance from their own peculiar territory; and determined to anticipate it by one of their own, where they might both confirm the sentence of deposition against Athanasius, and, if possible, contrive a confession of faith, to allay the suspicions, which the Occidentals entertained of their orthodoxy. This was the occasion of the Council of the Dedication, as it is called, held by them at Antioch, A. D. 341, and which is one of the most celebrated Councils of the century. It was usual to solemnize the consecration of places of worship, by an attendance of the principal ecclesiastics of the neighbouring districts; and the great Church of the Metropolis of Syria, called the Dominicum Aureum, which had just been built, afforded both the pretext and the name to their meeting. Between ninety and a hundred bishops assembled on this occasion, all Arians or Arianizers; and agreed without difficulty upon the immediate object of the Council, the ratification of the Synods of Cæsarea and Tyre in condemnation of Athanasius.

Its Cr

But a less easy task remained behind; viz. the conciliation of the Western Church, by an exposition of the articles of their

faith. Four, or even five creeds, more or less resembling the orthodox in language, were successively adopted, with a view of convincing the Latins of their freedom from doctrinal error. The first was that ascribed to the martyr Lucian, though doubts are entertained concerning its genuineness. It is in itself almost unexceptionable; and, had there been no controversies on the subjects contained in it, would have been a satisfactory evidence of the orthodoxy of its promulgators. The Son is therein styled the exact image, (ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκὼν,) of the substance (οὐσία), will, power, and glory of the Father; and the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity are said to be three in substance (ὑποστάσει), one in will. An evasive condemnation was added of the Arian tenets; sufficient, as it might seem, to delude the Latins, who were unskilled in the subtleties of the question. E. g. it was denied that our Lord was born "in time;" but in the heretical school, time was supposed to commence with the creation of the world; and that He was "in the number of the creatures," it being their doctrine, that He was the sole *immediate* work of God, and, as such, altogether distinct from what is commonly called the creation, of which indeed He was, even according to them, the author. Next, for some or other reason, two new creeds were proposed, and partially adopted by the Council; the same in character of doctrine, but shorter. These three were all circulated, and more or less received in the neighbouring Churches; but, on consideration, none of them seemed adequate to the object in view, that of recommending their authors to the distant Churches of the West. Accordingly, a fourth formulary was drawn up after a few months' delay by Mark, Bishop of Arethusa, and others, who were deputed to present it to Constans: and this proving unsatisfactory, a fifth confession was composed with considerable care and ability; but it too failed to quiet the suspicions of the Latins. This last is called the μακρόστιχος from its length, and did not make its appearance till three years after the former.

The Western Church suspicious of the Eusebians.

In truth, no such exposition of the Catholic faith could satisfy the Western Christians, while they were witnesses to the exile of its great champion for his fidelity to it. Here the Eusebians were wanting in their usual practical shrewdness. Words, however orthodox, could not weigh against so plain a fact The Occidentals, however unskilled in the niceties of the Greek language, were able to ascertain the heresy of the Eusebians in their malevolence towards Athanasius. Nay, the anxious attempts of his enemies, to please them in a confession of faith, were a refutation of their pretences. For, inasmuch as the sense of the Catholic world, had already been recorded in the Homoousion, why should they devise a new formulary, if they agreed with the Church? or, why should they be so

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fertile in confessions, if they had but one faith? It is brought against them by Athanasius, that they speak in their creeds of the *promulgation* of the Catholic doctrine, as if it were something new, instead simply of its being *declared*, which was the sole design of the orthodox creeds; while at other times, they affected to acknowledge the authority of former Councils, which nevertheless they were indirectly opposing.[a] Under these circumstances the Roman Church, as the representative of the Latins, only became more bent upon the convocation of a General Council in which the Nicene Creed might be ratified, not changed; and the innocence of Athanasius, which it had already ascertained in a provincial Synod, might be formally proved, and proclaimed to the whole of Christendom. This object was at length accomplished. Constans, whom Athanasius had visited and gained, successfully exerted his influence with his brother, the Emperor of the East; and a Council of the whole Christian world, was summoned at Sardica for the above purposes, the exculpation of Marcellus and others being included with that of Athanasius.

The Council of Sardica.

Sardica, was chosen as the place of meeting, as lying on the confines of the two divisions of the empire. It is on the borders of Mœsia, Thrace, and Illyricum, and at the foot of Mount Hæmus, which separates it from Philippopolis. There the heads of the Christian world assembled in the year 347, twenty-two years after the Nicene Council, in number above 380 bishops, of whom seventy six were Arian. The president of the Council was the venerable Hosius; whose name was in itself a pledge, that the decision of Nicæa was but to be preserved, and no fresh question raised on a subject already exhausted by controversy. But, almost before the opening of the Council, matters were brought to a crisis; a schism took place in its members; the Arians retreated to Philippopolis, and there excommunicated the leaders of the orthodox, Julius of Rome, Hosius, and Protogenes of Sardica, issued a sixth confession of faith, and confirmed the proceedings of the Antiochene Council against Athanasius and the other exiles.

Schism in the Council.

This secession of the Arians arose in consequence of their finding, that Athanasius was allowed a seat in the Council; the discussions of which they refused to attend, while a prelate was admitted to them, who had already been deposed by Synods of the East. The orthodox replied, that a later Council, held at Rome, had fully acquitted and restored him; moreover, that to maintain his guilt was but to assume the principal point, which they were then assembled to debate; and, though very consistent with their absenting themselves from the Council altogether, could not be permitted to those, who had by their

[a] Athan de Syn. 3. 37

coming recognised the object, for which it was called. Accordingly, without being moved by their retreat, the Council proceeded to the condemnation of some of the more notorious heretics among them, examined the charges against Athanasius and the rest, reviewed the acts of the investigations at Tyre and the Mareotis, which the Eusebians had sent to Rome in their defence, and confirmed the decree of the Council of Rome, in favour of the accused. Constans enforced this decision on his brother by the arguments peculiar to a monarch; and the timid Constantius, yielding to fear what he denied to justice, consented to restore a prelate, who had been condemned on the wildest of charges, by the most hostile and unprincipled of judges.

Its decision.

The journey of Athanasius to Alexandria elicited the fullest and most satisfactory testimonies of the real orthodoxy of the Eastern Churches; in spite of the existing cowardice or misapprehensions, which surrendered them to the tyrannical rule of a few determined and energetic heretics. The Bishops of Palestine, one of the chief holds of the Arian spirit, welcomed, with the solemnity of a Council, a restoration, which, under the circumstances of the case, was almost a triumph over their own sovereign; and so excited was the Catholic feeling at Antioch, that Constantius feared to grant to the Athanasians a single church in that city, lest it should have been the ruin of the Arian cause.

Restoration of Athanasius.

One of the more important consequences of the Council of Sardica, was the recantation of Valens, and his accomplice Ursacius, Bishop of Singidon, in Pannonia, two of the most inveterate enemies and calumniators of Athanasius. It was addressed to the Bishop of Rome, and was conceived in the following terms: "Whereas we are known heretofore to have preferred many serious charges against Athanasius the Bishop, and in our correspondence with your Holiness have failed to make good our charges, we declare to your Holiness, in the presence of all the presbyters, our brethren, that all which we have heretofore heard against the aforesaid, is false, and altogether foreign to his character; and therefore, that we heartily accept the fellowship of the aforesaid Athanasius, especially considering your Holiness, according to your habitual clemency, has condescended to pardon our mistake. Further we declare, that, should the Orientals at any time, or Athanasius, from resentful feelings, be desirous to bring us to account, that we will not act in the matter without your sanction. As for the heretic Arius, and his partizans, who say, that once the Son was not, that He is of created substance, and that He is not the Son of God before all time, we anathematize them now, and once for all, according to our former paper which we presented at Milan. Witness our

Recantation of Valens and Ursacius.

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hand, that we condemn once for all the Arian heresy, as we have already said, and its advocates. Witness also the hand of Ursacius.—I, Ursacius the Bishop, have set my name to this statement."[a]

The Council of Milan, referred to in the conclusion of this letter, seems to have been held A. D. 347; two years after the Arian creed, called μακρόστιχος, was sent in to the West, and shortly after the declaration of Constans in favour of the restoration of the Athanasians.

SECTION II.

THE SEMI-ARIANS.

SECT. II. Schism between the East and West.

THE events recorded in the last section were attended by important consequences in the history of Arianism. The Council of Sardica led to a separation between the Eastern and Western Churches; which seemed to be there represented respectively by the rival Synods, and which had before this time hidden their differences from each other, and communicated together from a fear of increasing the existing evil.[b] Not that really there was any discordance of doctrine between them. The historian, from whom this statement is taken, gives it at the same time as his own opinion, that the majority of the Asiatics were Homoousians, though tyrannised over by the court influence, the sophistry, the importunity, and the daring, of the Eusebian party. This mere handful of divines, unscrupulously pressing forward into the highest ecclesiastical stations, set about them to change the condition of the Churches thus put into their power; and, as has been remarked in the case of Leontius of Antioch, filled the inferior offices with their own creatures, and sowed the seeds of discords and disorders, which they could not hope to have themselves the satisfaction of beholding. The orthodox majority, on the other hand, timorously or indolently kept in the background; and allowed themselves to be represented at Sardica by men, whose tenets they knew to be unchristian, and professed to abominate. And in such circumstances, the blame of the open dissensions, which ensued between the Eastern and Western divisions of Christendom, was certain to be attributed to those who urged the summoning of the Council, not to those who neglected their duty by staying away. In qualification of this censure, however, the intriguing spirit of the Eusebians must be borne in mind; who might

[a] Athan. Apol. cont. Arian. 58. [b] Soz. iii. 13.

have means, of which we are not told, of keeping away the Oriental prelates from Sardica. Certainly the expense of the journey was considerable, whatever might be the imperial or the ecclesiastical allowance for it; and their absence from their flocks, especially in an age fertile in Councils, was an evil. Still there is enough in the history of the times, to evidence a culpable negligence on the part of the orthodox of Asia.

Its effect upon the fortunes of Arianism.

However, this rupture between the East and West has here been noticed, not to censure the Asiatic Churches, but for the sake of its influence on the fortunes of Arianism. It had the effect of pushing forward the Semi-arians, as they are called, into a party distinct from the Eusebians, among whom they had hitherto been concealed. This party, as its name implies, professed a doctrine approximating to the orthodox; and thus served as a means of deceiving the Western Churches, which were unskilled in the evasions, by which the Eusebians extricated themselves from the most explicit confessions of the Catholic doctrine. Accordingly, the six heretical confessions hitherto recounted were all Semi-arian, as being intended more or less to justify the heretical party in the eyes of the Latins. But when this object ceased to be feasible, by the event of the Sardican Council, the Semi-arians ceased to be of service to the Eusebians, and a separation between the parties gradually took place.

The Semi-arians.

The Semi-arians, whose history shall here be introduced, originated, as far as their system is concerned, in the change of profession which the Nicene anathema was the occasion of imposing upon the Eusebians; and had for their founders Eusebius of Cæsarea, and the sophist Asterius. But viewed as a *party*, they are of a later date. The genuine Eusebians were never in earnest in the modified creeds, which they so ostentatiously put forward for the approbation of the West. However, while they clamoured in defence of the inconsistent doctrine contained in them, which, resembling the orthodox in word, might really subvert it, at once admitting and denying our Lord's divinity, it so happened, that they actually recommended it to the judgment of some of their followers, and unintentionally created a belief in an hypothesis, which in their own case was but the cloke for their own indifference to the truth. This at least seems the true explanation of an intricate subject in the history. There are always men of sensitive and subtle minds, the natural prey of the bold disputant; who, unable to take a broad and common-sense view of an important subject, try to satisfy their intellect and conscience by refined distinctions and perverse reservations. Men of this stamp were especially to be found among a people possessed of the language and acuteness of the Greeks. Ac-

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cordingly, the Eusebians at length perceived, doubtless to their surprise and disgust, that a party had arisen from among themselves, with all the positiveness. (as they would consider it,) and nothing of the straightforward simplicity of the Catholic controversialists, more willing to dogmatize than to argue, and binding down their associates to the real import of the words, which they had chosen as mere evasions of orthodoxy; and to their dismay they discovered, that in this party the Emperor himself was to be numbered. Constantius, indeed, may be taken as a type of a genuine Semi-arian; resisting, as he did, the orthodox doctrine from over-subtlety, timidity, pride, restlessness, or other weakness of mind, yet paradoxical enough to combat at the same time and condemn all, who ventured to teach any thing *short* of that orthodoxy. Balanced on this imperceptible centre between truth and error, he alternately banished every party in the controversy, not even sparing his own; and had recourse in turn to every creed for relief, except that in which the truth was actually to be found.

The Homoeusion.

The symbol of the Semi-arians was the ὁμοιούσιον, which they substituted for the orthodox ὁμοούσιον. Their objections to the latter expression took the following form. If the word οὐσία denoted the πρώτη οὐσία or an individual being, then ὁμοούσιον seemed to bear a Sabellian meaning, and to involve a denial of the separate personality of the Son.[a] On the other hand, to include two distinct Persons (or ὑποστάσεις), under the term, was, as it were, to extend the οὐσία, as in the case of created things; as if it were, some common nature, either divided in fact, or one merely by abstraction.[b] They were strengthened in this view by the decree of the Council, held at Antioch, in condemnation of Paulus, when the word ὁμοούσιον was proscribed. They preferred, accordingly, to name the Son ὅμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν, or ὁμοιούσιος, with the Father, i. e. of a substance like in all things, except in not being the Father's substance; maintaining at the same time, that, though the Son and Spirit were separate in substance from the Father, still they were so included in His glory that there was but one God.

Creed of the Semi-arians.

Instead of admitting the evasion of the Arians, that the word *Son* had but a secondary sense, and that our Lord was in reality a creature, though "not like other creatures," they plainly declared that He was not a creature, but truly the Son, born of the substance (οὐσία) of the Father; yet they would not allow Him simply to be God, as the Father was; but, asserting that there were various energies in the Divine mind, they considered creation to be one, and the γέννησις to be another, so that the Son, though distinct in substance

[a] Epiph. Hær. lxxiii. 11. fin. [b] Soz. iii. 18

from God, was at the same time essentially distinct from every created nature. Or, again, they held, that He was the offspring of the ὑπόστασις, not the οὐσία of the Father; or, so to say, of the Divine θέλησις, as if the force of the metaphor of *Son* consisted in this point. Further, instead of the ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, they adopted the ἀχρόνως γεννηθέν, for which even Arius had changed it. That is, from a belief that the question of the beginning of the Son's existence was beyond our comprehension, they only asserted that there was such a beginning, but that it was before time and independent of it; as if it were possible to draw a distinction between the Catholic doctrine of the derivation or order of succession (ἀνάρχως γεννηθέν), and this notion of a beginning simplified of the condition of time.

Its inconsistencies.

Such was the Semi-arian creed, really involving those contradictions in terms, of which the orthodox were accused;—that the Son was born before all times, yet not eternal; not a creature, yet not God; of His substance, yet not of the same substance; and His exact and perfect resemblance in all things, yet not a second Deity.

Character of the Semi-arians.

Yet the men were better than their creed; and it is satisfactory to be able to detect amid the impiety and worldliness of the heretical party any elements of a purer spirit, which gradually exerted itself and worked out from the corrupt mass, in which it was imbedded. Even in their separated state the Semi-arians are a motley party at best; yet they may be considered as saints and martyrs, when viewed by the side of the Eusebians, and in fact some of them have actually been received as such by the Catholics of subsequent times. Their zeal in detecting the humanitarianism of Marcellus and Photinus, and their good service, in withstanding the Anomœans, who arrived at the same doctrine by a more blasphemous course, will presently be mentioned. On the whole they were men of correct and exemplary life, and earnest according to their views; and they even made pretensions to sanctity in their outward deportment, in which they differed from the true Eusebians, who, as far as the times allowed it, affected the manners and principles of the world. It may be added, that both Athanasius and Hilary, two of the most uncompromising supporters of the Catholic doctrine, speak favourably of them. Athanasius does not hesitate to call them brothers; considering that, however necessary it was for the edification of the Church at large, that the Homoousion should be enforced on the clergy, yet that the privileges of private Christian fellowship were not to be denied to those, who from one cause or other stumbled at the use of it.[a] It is

[a] Athan de Syn 41

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remarkable, that the Semi-arians, on the contrary, in their most celebrated Synod (at Ancyra, A. D. 358.) anathematized the holders of the Homoousion, as if cryptosabellians.[a]

Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste, and Eleusius of Cyzicus

Basil, the successor of Marcellus, in the see of Ancyra, united in his person the most varied learning with the most blameless life, of all the Semi-arians.[b] The praise of rectitude and purity of conduct was shared with him by Eustathius of Sebaste, and Eleusius. These three prelates especially attracted the regard of Hilary, on his banishment to Phrygia by the intrigues of the Arians (A. D. 356). The zealous confessor feelingly laments the condition, in which he found the Churches in those parts. "I say it not at a distance," he says, "I write not without information: I have heard and seen in my own person the deficiencies, not of laics merely, but of bishops. For, excepting Eleusius and a few with him, the ten provinces of Asia are for the most part truly ignorant of God."[c] His testimony in favour of the Semi-arians of Asia Minor, must in fairness be considered as delivered with the same force of assertion, which marks his protest against all but them; and he elsewhere addresses Basil, Eustathius, and Eleusius, by the title of Sanctissimi viri.[d]

Mark of Arethusa.

Mark, Bishop of Arethusa, in Syria, has obtained from the Greek Church the honours of a saint and martyr. He indulged a violence of spirit, which assimilates him to the pure Arians, who were the first among Christians to employ force in the cause of religion. But violence, which endures as freely as it assails, obtains our respect, if it is denied our praise. His exertions in the cause of Christianity, were attended with considerable success. In the reign of Constantius, availing himself of his power as a Christian, he demolished a heathen temple, and built a church on its site. When Julian succeeded, it was Mark's turn to suffer. The Emperor had been saved by him, when a child, on the massacre of the other princes of his house; but on this occasion he considered that the claims at once of justice and of paganism outweighed the recollection of ancient services. Mark was condemned to rebuild the temple, or to pay the price of it: and, on his flight from his bishoprick, many of his flock were arrested as his hostages. Upon this, he surrendered himself to his persecutors, who immediately subjected him to the most loathsome, as well as the most cruel indignities. "They apprehended the aged prelate," says Gibbon, selecting some of these, "they inhumanly scourged him: they tore his beard; and his naked body, anointed with honey, was suspended, in a net, between heaven and earth, and

[a] Epiph supra. [b] Theod Hist ii. 25

[c] Hilar. de Syn. 63

[d] Ibid 90. Vid also the Life of St Basil of Cæsarea, who was intimate with Eustathius and others

exposed to the stings of insects and the rays of a Syrian sun." [a] The payment of one piece of gold towards the rebuilding of the temple, would have rescued him from these torments; but, resolute in his refusal to contribute to the service of idolatry, he allowed himself, with a generous insensibility, even to jest at his own sufferings,[b] till he wore out the fury, or even, it is said, effected the conversion of his persecutors. Gregory Nazianzen, and Theodoret, besides celebrating his activity in proselyting, make mention of his wisdom and piety, his cultivated understanding, his love of virtue, and the honourable consistency of his life.[c]

Cyril of Jerusalem; Eusebius of Samosata.

Cyril of Jerusalem, and Eusebius of Samosata, are both saints in the Roman Calendar, though connected with the Semi-arian party. Eusebius was the friend of St. Basil, surnamed the Great; and Cyril is still known to us in his perspicuous and eloquent discourses addressed to the Catechumens.

Macedonius of Constantinople.

Others might be named of a like respectability, though deficient with those above-mentioned either in moral or in intellectual judgment. With these were mingled a few of a darker character. George of Laodicea, one of the genuine Eusebians, joined them for a time, and took a chief share together with Basil in the management of the Council of Ancyra. Macedonius, who was originally an Anomœan, passed through Semi-arianism to the heresy of the Pneumatomachists, of which he is theologically the founder.

Death of Constans.

The Semi-arians, being such as above described, were both in faith and conduct an ornament and recommendation of the Eusebians. But, when once the latter stood at variance with the Latin Church by the event of the Sardican Council, they ceased to be of service, as a blind, or rather were an incumbrance to them, and formidable rivals in the favour of Constantius. This separation between the two parties was probably retarded for a while by the forced submission and recantation of Valens and Ursacius; but an event soon happened, which altogether released those prelates and the rest of the Eusebians from the embarrassments, in which the influence of the West and the timidity of Constantius had involved them. This was the assassination of Constans, which took place A. D. 350; in consequence of which, (Constantine, the eldest of the brothers, being already dead,) Constantius succeeded to the whole empire. Thus the Eusebians had the whole of the West opened to their ambition; and were bound by no impediment, except such as the ill-instructed Semi-arianism of the Emperor might impose upon them. Their proceedings under these fortunate circumstances will come before us presently;

[a] Gibbon. Hist. ch. xxiii. [b] Soz. v. 10.
[c] Tillem Mém. vol. vii. p. 340

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here I will confine myself to the mention of the artifice, by which they succeeded in recommending themselves to Constantius, while they opposed and triumphed over the Semi-arian Creed.

Doctrinal artifice of Acacius.

This artifice, which, obvious as it is, is curious, from the place which it holds in the history of Arianism, was that of affecting on principle to limit confessions of faith to Scripture terms; and was adopted by Acacius of Cæsarea, one of the very men, who had advocated the non-scriptural formularies of the Dedication and of Philippopolis.[a] From the earliest date, the Arians had taken refuge from their own unscriptural dogmas in the words of the sacred writers; but they had scarcely ventured on the inconsistency of objecting to the terms of theology, as such. But here Eusebius of Cæsarea anticipated the proceedings of his party; and, as he instructed his contemporaries in the evasion of Semi-arianism, so did he also suggest to his pupil Acacius the more specious artifice now under consideration. The idea of it is found in his apology for signing the Nicene anathema of the Arian formulæ; which anathema he defends on the principle, that these were not conceived in the language of Scripture.[b] Allusion is made to the same principle from time to time in the subsequent Arian Councils, as if even then the laxer Eusebians were struggling against the tyranny of the Semi-arians. Though the creed of Lucian introduces the οὐσία, the three other creeds of the Dedication omit it; and this hypothesis of a difference of opinion in the heretical body partly accounts for that hesitation and ambiguity in declaring their faith, which has been noticed in its place. Again, the Macrostyche omits the οὐσία, professes generally that the Son is κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον τῷ Πατρί, and enforces the propriety of keeping to the language of Scripture.[c]

The Homœon.

About the time which is at present more particularly before us, this modification of Arianism becomes distinct, and collects around it the Eastern Eusebians, under the skilful management of Acacius. It is not easy to fix the date of his openly adopting it; the immediate cause of which was his quarrel with the Semi-arian Cyril, which lies between A. D. 349—357. The distinguishing *principle* of his new doctrine was adherence to the Scripture phraseology, in opposition to the inconvenient dogmatism of the Semi-arians; its distinguishing *tenet* is the ὅμοιον or κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον, as opposed to the ὁμοούσιον, ὁμοιούσιον, and ἀνόμοιον, i. e. the vague confession that the Son is *generally like*, or *altogether like*, the Father. Of these two expressions, the κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον was allowed by the Semi-arians, who included κατ' οὐσίαν under it; whereas the Acacians,

[a] Athan. de Syn. 36—38.
[b] Vid. also Theod. Hist. ii. 3. [c] Vid. Athan de Synod.

(for so they may now be called,) covertly intended to exclude the κατ' οὐσίαν by the very expression, similarity always implying difference, and οὐσία being, as they would argue, necessarily excluded from the πάντα, if the ὅμοιον were intended to stand for any thing short of identity. It is plain then that, in the meaning of its authors, and in the practical effect of it, this new hypothesis was neither more nor less than pure Arian, or Anomœan, though the phrase, in which it was conveyed, bore literally the reverse sense.

Such was the state of the heresy about the year 350; before reviewing its history, as carried on between the two rival parties into which its advocates were dividing, I shall turn to the sufferings of the Catholic Church at that period.

SECTION III.

THE ATHANASIANS.

SECT. III.

The first Arian Persecution is spread over the space of about twelve years, being the interval between the death of Constans, and that of Constantius. Various local violences, particularly at Alexandria and Constantinople, had occurred with the countenance of the Eusebians at an earlier date; but they were rather acts of revenge, than intended as means of proselyting the Catholics, and were conducted on no plan. But now the alternative of subscription or suffering was gradually introduced; and, though Arianism was more sanguinary in its later persecutions, it could not be more abandoned and audacious than it showed itself in this.

Open persecution by the Arians.

The artifice of the Homoion, of which Acacius had undertaken the management, was adapted to promote the success of his party, among the orthodox of the West, as well as to delude or embarrass the Semi-arians, for whom it was particularly provided. The Latin Churches, who had not been exposed to those trials of heretical subtlety of which the Homoousion was reluctantly made the remedy, had adhered with a noble simplicity to the decision of Nicæa; being satisfied, (as it would seem,) that, whether or not they had need of the test of orthodoxy at present, yet that in it lay the security of the great doctrine in debate, whenever the need should come. At the same time, they were naturally jealous of the introduction of such terms into their theology, as chiefly served to inform them of the dissensions of foreigners; and, as influenced by this feeling, even after their leaders had declared against the Eusebians at Sardica, were exposed to the temptation pre-

Application of the Homoion to the Western Christians

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sented to them in the formula of the Homoion. To shut up the subject in Scripture terms, and to say that our Lord was *like* His Father, no explanation being added, seemed to be a peaceful doctrine, and certainly was in itself unexceptionable; and, of course would wear a still more favourable aspect, when contrasted with the threat of exile and poverty, by which its acceptance was enforced. On the other hand, the proposed measure veiled the grossness of that threat itself, and fixed the attention of the solicited Churches rather upon the argument, than upon the Imperial command. Minds that are proof against the mere menaces of power, are overcome by the artifices of an importunate casuistry. Those, who would rather have suffered death than have sanctioned the impieties of Arius, hardly saw how to defend themselves in refusing creeds, which were abstractedly true, though incomplete, and intolerable only because the badges of a prevaricating party. Thus Arianism gained its first footing in the West. And, when one concession was made, another was demanded; or, at other times, the first concession was converted, not without speciousness, into a principle of general theological change, as if to depart from the Homoousion were in fact to acquiesce in the open impieties of Arius and the Anomœans. This is the character of the history more or less illustrated in this and the subsequent section; the Catholics harassed by sophistry and persecution, and the Semi-arians first acquiescing in the Homoion, then retracting, and becoming more distinct upon the scene, as the Eusebians ventured to speak of our Lord in less honourable terms.

Condemnation of Athanasius.

But there was another subscription, required of the Catholics during the same period and from an earlier date, as painful, and to all but the most honest minds as embarrassing, as that to the creed of the Homoion; the condemnation of Athanasius. The Eusebians were incited against him by resentment and jealousy; they perceived that the success of their schemes was impossible, while there was a prelate alive, so popular at home, so respected abroad, the bond of connexion between the orthodox of Europe and Asia, the organ of their sentiments, and the guide and vigorous agent of their counsels. Moreover, the circumstances of the times, had attached an adventitious importance to his fortunes; as if the cause of the Homoousion were providentially committed to his custody, and in his safety or overthrow, the triumph or loss of the truth were actually involved. And, in the eyes of the Emperor, the Catholic champion appeared as a rival of his own sovereignty; type, as he really was, and instrument of that Apostolic Order, which, whether or not united to the civil power, must, to the end of time, divide the rule with Cæsar as the Minister of God. Considering then Athanasius too great for a subject, Constan-

tius, as if for the peace of his empire, desired his destruction at any rate.[a] Whether he was unfortunate or culpable it mattered not; whether implicated in legal guilt, or forced by circumstances into his present position; still he was the fit victim of a sort of ecclesiastical ostracism, which, accordingly, he called upon the Church to exercise. He demanded it of the Church, for the very eminence of Athanasius rendered it unsafe, even for the Emperor, to approach him in any other way. The Patriarch of Alexandria could not be deposed, except after a series of successes over less influential Catholics, and with the forced acquiescence or countenance of the principal Christian communities. And thus the history of the first few years of the persecution, presents to us the curious spectacle of the violences of the enemies of truth spreading every where, except about the person who was the real object of them; who was left for a time to continue his services in God's cause at Alexandria, unmolested by the Councils, conferences, and usurpations, which perplexed the other capitals of Christendom.

Charges against him.

As regards the majority of prelates, who were called upon to condemn him, there was, it would appear, little room for error of judgment, if they dealt honestly with their consciences. Yet, in the West, there were many, doubtless, who hardly knew enough of him to give him their confidence, or who had no means of forming a true opinion of the fresh charges, to which he was subjected. These, if it is worth while to notice them, were as follows: that he had excited differences between Constantius and his brother; that he had corresponded with Magnentius, the usurper of the West; that he had dedicated, or used, a new Church in Alexandria without the Emperor's leave; and lastly, that he had not obeyed his mandate summoning him to Italy.—In the following notices of the persecution, it has been thought advisable to begin at a somewhat earlier date than the transactions referred to in the foregoing remarks.

Persecution of the Church of Constantinople.

1. Paul had succeeded Alexander in the See of Constantinople, A. D. 336. At the date before us (A. D. 350), he had already been thrice driven from his Church by the intrigues of the Arians; Pontus, Gaul, and Mesopotamia, being successively the places of his exile. He had now been two years restored, when he was called a fourth time, not merely to exile, but to martyrdom. By authority of the Emperor, he was conveyed from Constantinople to Cucusus in Cappadocia, a dreary town amid the deserts of Taurus, afterwards the place of banishment of his successor St. Chrysostom. Here he was left for six days without food; when his conductors impatiently anticipated

[a] Gibbon Hist. ch. xxi.

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the termination of his sufferings by strangling him in prison. Macedonius, the Semi-arian, took possession of the vacant see, and maintained his power by the most savage excesses. The confiscation of property, banishment, brandings, torture, and death, were the means of his accomplishing, in the Church of Constantinople, a conformity with the tenets of heresy. The Novatians, as maintaining the Homoousion, were included in the persecution. On their refusing to communicate with him, they were seized and scourged, and the sacred elements violently thrust into their mouths. Women and children were forcibly baptized; and, on the former resisting, they were subjected to cruelties too miserable to be described.

Of the Church of Adrianople.

2. The sufferings of the Church of Hadrianople occurred about the same time, or even earlier. Under the superintendence of a civil officer, who had already acted as the tool of the Arians in the Marcotis, several of the clergy were beheaded; Lucius, their bishop, for the second time loaded with chains and sent into exile, where he died; and three other bishops of the neighbourhood visited by an Imperial Edict, which banished them, at the peril of their lives, from all parts of the empire.

Deposition of Photinus of Sirmium.

3. Continuing their operations westward, the Arians next possessed themselves of the province of Sirmium in Pannonia, in which the dioceses of Valens and Ursacius were situated. They were enabled to do so under the following circumstances. It had always been their policy, to accuse the Homoousion of involving some or other heresy by necessary consequence. A Valentinian or a Manichean materialism was sometimes ascribed to the orthodox doctrine; and at another time, Sabellianism, which was peculiarly abominated by the Semi-arians. And it happened, most unhappily for the Church, that one of the most strenuous of her champions at Nicæa, had since fallen into a heresy of a Sabellian character; and had thus confirmed the prejudice against the true doctrine, by what would be considered an instance of its dangerous tendency. It was in the course of a work in refutation of the Sophist Asterius, the founder of the Semi-arians, that Marcellus of Ancyra was led to simplify, (as he conceived,) the creed of the Church, by statements which savoured of Sabellianism; i. e. he maintained the unity of the Son with the Father, at the expence of the doctrine of the personal distinction between them. He was answered, not only by Asterius, but by Eusebius of Cæsarea and Acacius; and, A. D. 335, he was deposed from his see by the Eusebians, in order to make way for the Semi-arian Basil. In spite of the suspicions against him, the orthodox party defended him, for a considerable time, and the Council of Sardica (A. D. 347) acquitted him and restored him to his see; but at length, perhaps on account of the increasing definiteness

of his heretical views, he was abandoned by his friends as hopeless, even by Athanasius, who quietly put him aside with the acquiescence of Marcellus himself. The evil did not end there; his disciple Photinus, Bishop of Sirmium, increased the scandal, by advocating the same opinions with greater boldness than his master. The Arians did not neglect the opportunity thus offered them, both to calumniate the Catholic doctrine, and to seize on so considerable a station in the Church, which its present occupier had disgraced by his heresy. A Council was held at Sirmium (A. D. 351), to inquire into his opinions; and at his request a formal disputation was held. Basil, the rival of Marcellus, was selected to be the antagonist of his pupil; and, having the easier position to defend, gained the victory in the judgment of impartial arbiters, who had been selected. The deposition of Photinus followed; and a new creed was promulgated of a structure between Homœusian and Homœan. Germinius, who was put into his see, was at the time an Arian; but some years afterwards adopted a Semi-arianism verging upon the Catholic creed, and that at a time, when it may be hoped that secular views did not influence his change.

Fall of Vincent of Capua at Arles.

4. The first open attack upon Athanasius and the independence of the West, was made two years later at Arles, at that time the residence of the Court. The Arians had already solicited the friendship of Liberius, the new Bishop of Rome, hoping to find him more tractable than his predecessor Julius. A letter however from an Egyptian Council, in favour of Athanasius, decided him against his persecutors; at the same time, to soften his refusal, he sent to Constantius a submissive message, petitioning him to assemble a general and final Council at Aquileia, a measure which the Emperor had already led the Catholics to expect. The deputies of the Roman See found him at Arles, already engaged with his bishops in the execution of his purposes against Athanasius. It was in vain that the Western Bishops demanded, that the orthodox creed should be acknowledged by the meeting, or Arius condemned, as a previous step to their condemnation of Athanasius. Valens, the most daring of the Eusebians, seconded the imperiousness of Constantius; ill treatment was added; till the Bishops, worn out by sufferings, consented to depose and even excommunicate the Alexandrian prelate. Upon this, an edict was published, denouncing punishment on all Bishops who refused to subscribe the decree thus obtained. Among the instances of cowardice, which were exhibited at Arles, none was more lamentable than that of Vincent of Capua, one of the deputies from Liberius to the Emperor. Vincent had on former occasions shown himself a zealous supporter of orthodoxy. He is supposed to be the presbyter

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of the same name, who was one of the representatives of the Roman Bishop at Nicæa; he had acted with the orthodox at Sardica, and had afterwards been sent by Constans to Constantius, to effect the restoration of the Athanasians in A. D. 348. It was on this occasion, that he and his companion had been exposed to the malice of Stephen, the Arian Bishop of Antioch: who, anxious to destroy their influence, caused a woman of light character to be introduced into their chamber, with the intention of founding a calumny against them; and who, on the artifice being discovered, was deposed by order of Constantius. On the present occasion, Vincent was entirely in the confidence of Liberius; who, having intrusted him with his delicate commission from a sense of his vigour and experience, was deeply afflicted at his fall. It is satisfactory to know, that Vincent retrieved himself afterwards at Ariminum; where he boldly resisted the tyrannical attempt of the Arians, to force their creed on the Western Church.

Council of Milan.

5. Times of trial bring forward men of zeal and boldness, who else would be unknown to posterity. Liberius, downcast at the disgrace of his representative, and liable himself to fluctuations of mind, was unexpectedly cheered by the arrival of the famous Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari, in Sardinia, and Eusebius of Vercellæ. These, joined by a few others, proceeded as his deputies and advocates to the great Council of Milan, which was held (A. D. 355), two years later than that in which Vincent fell. The prelates collected there were in number above 300, almost all of the Western Church. Constantius was present, and Valens conducted the Arian intrigue; and so secure of success were he and his party, that they did not scruple to insult the Council with the proposal of a pure Arian or Anomœan creed.

Athanasius condemned.

Whether this creed was generally subscribed, does not appear; but the condemnation of Athanasius was universally agreed upon, scarcely one or two of the whole number refusing to sign it. This is remarkable; inasmuch as, at first, the Occidentals demanded of the Eusebians an avowal of the orthodox faith, as the condition of entering upon the consideration of the charges against him. But herein is the strength of audacious men; who gain what is unjust, by asking what is extravagant. Sozomen attributes the concession of the Council to fear, surprise, and ignorance.[a] In truth, a multitude of men, who were strangers to each other, and without organization or recognized leaders, definite objects or policy, was open to every variety of influence, which the shrewdness of the usurping faction might direct against them. The

[a] Soz. iv. 9

simplicity of honesty, the weakness of an amiable temper, the inexperience of a secluded, and the dulness of a rustic life, all combined with the dread of the Emperor's displeasure, which had been openly manifested on their hesitation. When some of them ventured to object the rule of the Church against his command, that they should condemn Athanasius, and communicate with the Arians, "My will must be its rule," he replied; "so the Syrian Bishops have decided; and so must yourselves, would you escape exile."

Banishment of the orthodox Prelates; of Dionysius of Milan.

Several of the more noble-minded prelates of the principal Churches submitted to the alternative, and left their sees. Dionysius, Exarch of Milan, was banished to Cappadocia or Armenia, where he died before the end of the persecution; Auxentius being placed in his see, a bitter Arian, brought for the purpose from Cappadocia, and from his ignorance of Latin, singularly ill-fitted to preside over a Western province. Lucifer was sent into Syria, and Eusebius of Vercellæ into Palestine. A fresh and more violent edict was published against Athanasius; orders were given to arrest him as an impious person, and to put the Arians in possession of his churches, and of the benefactions, which Constantine had left for ecclesiastical and charitable uses. All Bishops were prohibited from communion with him, under pain of losing their sees; and the laity were to be compelled by the magistrates to join themselves to the heretical party. Hilary of Poitiers was the next victim of the persecution. He had taken part in a petition, presented to Constantius, in behalf of the exiled bishops. In consequence a Gallic Council was called, under the presidency of Saturninus, Bishop of Arles; and Hilary was banished into Phrygia.

Lucifer of Caghari, Eusebius of Vercellæ.

Hilary of Poitiers

Liberius of Rome

6. The history of Liberius, the occupier of the most powerful see in the West, possesses an interest, which deserves our careful attention. The year after the Council of Milan, the principal eunuch of the Imperial Court had been sent, to urge on him by threats and promises the condemnation of Athanasius; and, on his insisting on a fair trial for the accused, and a disavowal of Arianism on the part of his accusers, as preliminary conditions, had caused him to be forced away to Milan. There the same arguments were addressed to him in the more impressive words of the Emperor himself; who urged upon him "the notoriously wicked life of Athanasius, his vexatious opposition to the peace of the Church, his intrigues to effect a quarrel between the imperial brothers, and his frequent condemnation in the Councils of Eastern and Western Christendom;" and further exhorted him, as being by his pastoral office especially a man of peace, to be cautious of appearing the sole obstacle to the happy settlement of a question, which could not otherwise be arranged. Liberius

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replied by demanding of Constantius even more than his deputies had proposed to the Milanese Council;—first, that there should be a general subscription to the Nicene faith throughout the Church; next, that the banished bishops should be restored to their sees; and lastly, should the trial of Athanasius be still thought advisable, that a Council should be held at Alexandria, where justice might be fairly dealt between him and his accusers. The conference ended in the bishop being allowed three days to choose between making the required subscription, and going into exile; at the end of which time he manfully departed for Berœa, in Thrace. Constantius and the empress, struck with the nobleness of his conduct, sent after him a thousand pieces of gold; but he refused a gift, which must have laid him under restraint towards heretical benefactors. Much more promptly did he reject the offer of assistance, which Eusebius, the eunuch before-mentioned, from whatever feeling, made him. "You have desolated the Churches of Christendom," he said to the powerful favourite, "and then you offer me alms as a convict. Go, first learn to be a Christian."[a]

Liberius wavers.

There are men, in whose mouths sentiments, such as these, are becoming and admirable, as being the result of Christian magnanimity, and urged upon them by their station in the Church. But the sequel of the history shows, that in the conduct of Liberius there was more of personal feeling and intemperate indignation, than of deep-seated fortitude of soul. His fall, which followed, scandalous as it is in itself, may yet be taken to illustrate the silent firmness of those others his fellow-sufferers, of whom we hear less, because they bore themselves more consistently. Two years of exile, among the uncouth solitudes of Thrace, broke his spirit; and the triumph of his deacon Felix, who had succeeded to his power, painfully forced upon his imagination his own listless condition, which brought him no work to perform, and no witness of his sufferings for the truth's sake. Demophilus, one of the foremost of the Eusebian party, was bishop of Berœa, the place of his banishment; and gave intelligence of his growing melancholy to his associates. Wise in their generation, they had an instrument ready prepared for the tempter's office. Fortunatian, Bishop of Aquileia, who stood high in the opinion of Liberius for disinterestedness and courage, had conformed to the court-religion in the Anomœan Council of Milan; and he was now employed by the Eusebians, to gain over the wavering prelate. The arguments of Fortunatian and Demophilus shall be given in the words of Maimbourg. "They told him, that they could not conceive, how a man of his worth and

[a] Soz. iv. 11. Theod. Hist. ii. 16.

spirit could so long obstinately resolve to be miserable, upon a chimerical notion, which subsisted only in the imagination of people of weak or no understanding; that, indeed, if he suffered for the cause of God and the Church, of which God had given him the government, they should not only look upon his sufferings as glorious, but, being willing to partake of his glory, they should also become his companions in banishment themselves. But that this matter related neither to God nor religion; that it concerned merely a private person, named Athanasius, whose cause had nothing in common with that of the Church, whom the public voice had long since accused of numberless crimes, whom Councils had condemned, and who had been turned out of his see by the great Constantine, whose judgment alone was sufficient to justify all that the East and West had so often pronounced against him. That, even if he were not so guilty as men made him, yet it was necessary to sacrifice him to the peace of the Church, and to throw him into the sea to appease the storm, which he was the occasion of raising; but that, the greater part of the Bishops having condemned him, the defending him would be causing a schism, and that it was a very uncommon sight to see the Roman prelate abandon the care of the Church, and banish himself into Thrace, to become the martyr of one, whom both divine and human justice had so often declared guilty. That it was high time to undeceive himself, and to open his eyes at last; to see, whether it was not passion in Athanasius, which gave a false alarm, and opposed an imaginary heresy, to make the world believe, that they had a mind to establish error."[a]

Liberius falls.

The arguments, diffusively but instructively reported in the above extract, were enforced by the threat of death as the consequence of obstinacy; while, on the other hand, a temptation of a peculiar nature presented itself to the exiled bishop in his very popularity with the Roman people, which was such, that Constantius had already been obliged to promise them his restoration. Moreover, as if to give a reality to the inducements by which he was assailed, a specific plan of mutual concession and concord had been projected, in which he was required to take part. The Western Catholics had, as we have seen, continually required evidence of the orthodoxy of the Eusebians, before they consented to take part with them against Athanasius. Constantius, desirous of ingratiating himself with the people of Rome, and himself a Semi-arian, and at that time alarmed at the increasing boldness of the Anomœans, was not unwilling to force a union of all

[a] Webster's translation is used; one or two irrelevant phrases, introduced by Maimbourg on the subject of Roman supremacy, being omitted.

opinions on the basis of his own creed; and thus, while sacrificing the Anomœans, whom he feared, to the Catholics, and claiming from them in turn what were scarcely concessions, in the imperfect language of the West, to realize that religious agreement, the alleged existence of which had been his principal argument against the inflexible orthodoxy of Athanasius. Moreover, the heresies of Marcellus and Photinus were in favour of his scheme; for, by dwelling upon them, he withdrew the eyes of the Church from the contrary errors of Semi-arianism. A creed was compiled from three former confessions, that of the orthodox Council against Paulus (A. D. 264), that of the Dedication (A. D. 341), and a third lately published at Sirmium, on the condemnation of Photinus (A.D. 351). Thus carefully composed, it was signed by all parties, Eusebians and Semi-arians, as well as Liberius; the Eusebians being compelled by the Emperor to submit for the time to the dogmatic formulæ, which they had gradually abandoned. Were it desirable to enlarge on this miserable apostacy, there are abundant materials in the letters, which Liberius wrote in renunciation of Athanasius, to his clergy, and to the Arian prelates. To Valens he protests, that nothing but his love of peace, greater than his desire of martyrdom itself, would have led him to the step which he had taken; in another he declares, that he has but followed his conscience in God's sight.[a] To add to his misery, Constantius suffered him for a while to linger in exile, after he had given way. At length he was restored; and at Ariminum in a measure retrieved his error, together with Vincent of Capua.

Persecution of Hosius.

7. The sufferings and trials of Hosius, which took place about the same time, are calculated to impress the mind with the most sorrowful feelings, and still more with a lively indignation against his inhuman persecutors. Shortly before the conference at Sirmium, at which Liberius gave his allegiance to the supremacy of Semi-arianism, a creed had been drawn up in the same city by Valens and the other more daring of the Eusebians. It would seem, that at this date Constantius had not taken the alarm against the Anomœans, to the extent in which he felt it soon afterwards, on the news probably of their proceedings in the East. Accordingly, the creed in question is of a mixed character. Not venturing on the Anomoion, as at Milan, it nevertheless condemns the use of the ousia (substance), Homoousion, and Homoiousion, on somewhat of the equivocal plan, of which Acacius was the most conspicuous patron; and being such, it was presented for signature to the aged Bishop of Corduba. The cruelty which they exercised to accomplish their purpose, was worthy of that singularly wicked

[a] Hilar. Fragm. iv. and vi.

faction, which Eusebius had organised. Hosius was at this time 101 years old; and had passed a life, prolonged beyond the age of man, in services and sufferings in the cause of Christ. He had assisted in the celebrated Council of Elvira (about) A. D. 300, and had been distinguished as a confessor in the Maximinian persecution. He presided at the General Councils of Nicæa and Sardica, and was perhaps the only prelate, besides Athanasius, who was known and reverenced at once in the East and West. When Constantius became possessed of the Western world, far from relaxing his zeal in a cause discountenanced at the Court, Hosius had exerted himself in his own diocese for the orthodox faith; and, when the persecution began, endeavoured by letter to rouse other bishops to a sense of the connexion between the acquittal of Athanasius, and the maintenance of divine truth. The Eusebians were irritated by his opposition; he was summoned to the Court at Milan, and, after a vain attempt to shake his constancy, dismissed back to his see. The importunities of Constantius being shortly after renewed, both in the way of threats and of promises, Hosius addressed him an admirable letter, which Athanasius has preserved. After declaring his willingness to repeat, should it be necessary, the good confession which he had witnessed in the heathen persecution, he exhorts the Emperor to abandon his unscriptural creed, and to turn his ear from Arian advisers. He states his conviction, that the condemnation of Athanasius was urged merely for the establishment of the heresy; declares, that at Sardica his accusers had been challenged publicly to produce the proof of their allegations, and had failed, and that he himself had conversed with them in private, and could gain nothing satisfactory from them; and he further reminds Constantius, that Valens and Ursacius had retracted the charges, which they had formerly urged against him. "Change your course of action, I beseech you," continues the earnest Prelate; "remember that you are a man. Fear the day of judgment; keep your hands clean against it; meddle not with Church matters; far from advising us about them, rather seek instruction from us. God has put dominion into your hands; to us He has entrusted the management of the Church; and, as a traitor to you is a rebel to the God Who ordained you, so be afraid on your part, lest, usurping ecclesiastical power, you become guilty of a great sin. It is written, 'Render unto Cæsar, Cæsar's, and what is God's, to God.' We may not bear rule; you, O Emperor, may not burn incense. I write this from a care for your soul. As to your message, I remain in the same mind. I do not join the Arians. I anathematize them. I do not subscribe the condemnation of Athanasius."[a] Hosius did not address

[a] Athan. Hist. Arian ad Monach. 44

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such language with impunity to a Court, which affected the majesty of oriental despotism. He was summoned to Sirmium, and thrown into prison. There he remained for a whole year. Tortures were added to force the old man from his resolution. He was scourged, and afterwards placed upon the rack. Mysterious it was, that so honoured a life should be preserved to an extremity of age, to become the sport and triumph of the Enemy of mankind. At length broken in spirit, the contemporary of Gregory and Dionysius, was induced to countenance the impieties of the generation, into which he had lived; not indeed signing the condemnation of Athanasius, for he spurned that baseness to the last, but yielding subscription to a formulary, which forbad the mention of the Homoousion, and thus virtually condemned the creed of Nicæa, and countenanced the Arian proceedings. Hosius lived about two years after this tragical event; and, on his deathbed, he protested against the compulsion which had been used towards him, and, with his last breath, abjured the heresy which dishonoured his Divine Lord and Saviour.

Athanasius.

8. Meanwhile, the great Egyptian prelate, seated on his patriarchal throne, had calmly prosecuted the work, for which he was raised up, as if his name had not been mentioned in the Arian Councils, and the troubles, which agitated the Western Church, were not the prelude to the blow, which was to fall on himself. Untutored in concession to impiety, by the experience or the prospect of suffering, yet, sensitively alive to the difference between unbelief and error, while he punished he spared, and restored in the spirit of meekness, while he rebuked and rejected with power. On his return to Alexandria, seven years previous to the events last recorded, congratulations and professions of attachment poured in upon him from the provinces of the whole Roman world, near and distant. From Africa to Illyricum, and from England to Palestine, 400 episcopal letters solicited his communion or patronage; and apologies, and the officiousness of personal service were liberally tendered by those, who, through cowardice, dulness, or self-interest, had joined themselves to the heretical party. Nor did Athanasius fail to improve the season of prosperity, for the true moral strength and substantial holiness of the people committed to him. The sacred services were diligently attended; alms and benefactions supplied the wants of the friendless and infirm; and the young turned their thoughts to that generous consecration of themselves to God, recommended by St. Paul in times of trouble and persecution.

Previous trials of the Alexandrian

In truth the sufferings, which the Church of Alexandria had lately undergone from the hands of the Eusebians, were sufficient to indispose serious minds towards secular engage-

ments, or vows of duty to a fellow mortal; to quench those anticipations of quietness and peace, which the overthrow of paganism had at first excited; and to remind them, that the girdle of celibacy and the lamp of watchers best became those, on whom God's judgments might fall suddenly. Not more than ten years were gone by, since Gregory, appointed to the See of Athanasius by the Council of the Dedication, had been thrust upon them by the Imperial Governor, with the most frightful and revolting outrages. Philagrius, an apostate from the Christian faith, and Arsacius, an eunuch of the court, introduced the Eusebian Bishop into his episcopal city. A Church besieged and spoiled, the massacre of the assembled worshippers, the clergy trodden under foot, the women subjected to the most infamous profanations, these were the first benedictory greetings scattered by the Arian among his people. Next, bishops were robbed, beaten, imprisoned, banished; the sacred elements of the Eucharist were scornfully cast about by the heathen rabble, which seconded the usurping party; birds and fruits were offered in sacrifice on the holy table; hymns chaunted in honour of the idols of paganism; and the Scriptures given to the flames.

Exhortation of the Council of Sardica.

Such had already been the trial of a much-enduring Church; and it might be renewed in spite of its present prosperity. The Council of Sardica, convoked principally to remedy these miserable disorders, had in its synodal letter warned the Alexandrian Catholics against relaxing in their brave testimony to the faith of the Gospel. "We exhort you, beloved brethren, before all things, that ye hold the right faith of the Catholic Church. Many and grievous have been your sufferings, and many are the insults and injuries inflicted on the Catholic Church, but 'he, who endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.' Wherefore, should they essay further enormities against you, let affliction be your rejoicing. For such sufferings are a kind of martyrdom, and such confessions and tortures have their reward. Ye shall receive from God the combatant's prize. Wherefore struggle with all might for the sound faith, and for the exculpation of our brother Athanasius, your bishop. We on our part have not been silent about you, nor neglected to provide for your security; but have been mindful, and done all that Christian love requires of us, suffering with our suffering brethren, and accounting their trials as our own."[a]

George of Cappadocia.

The time was now at hand, which was anticipated by the prophetic solicitude of the Sardican Fathers. The same year in which Hosius was thrown into prison, the furies of heretical malice were let loose upon the Catholics of Alexandria.

[a] Athan. Apol. cont. Arian. 38.

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George of Cappadocia, a man of illiterate mind and savage manners, was selected by the Eusebians as their new substitute for Athanasius in the see of that city; and the charge of executing this extraordinary determination was committed to Syrianus, Duke of Egypt. The scenes which followed are but the repetition, with more aggravated horrors, of the atrocities perpetrated by the intruder Gregory. Syrianus entered Alexandria at night; and straightway proceeded with his soldiers to one of the churches, where the Alexandrians were engaged in the services of religion. We have the account of the irruption from Athanasius himself; who, being accused by the Arians of cowardice, on occasion of his subsequent flight, after defending his conduct from Scripture, describes the circumstances, under which he was driven from his Church. "It was now night," he says, "and some of our people were keeping vigil, preparatory to receiving the Lord's Supper; when Syrianus suddenly came upon us, with a force of above 5000 men, prepared for attack, with drawn swords, bows, darts, and clubs, . . . and surrounded the church with close parties of the soldiery, that none might escape from within. There seemed an impropriety in my deserting my congregation in such a riot, instead of hazarding the danger in their stead; so I placed myself in my bishop's chair, and bade the deacon read the Psalm (Ps. cxxxvi.), and the congregation alternate 'for His mercy endureth for ever,' and then all retire and go home. But the General bursting at length into the church, and his soldiers blocking up the chancel, with a view of arresting me, the clergy and some of my people present began in their turn clamorously to urge me to withdraw myself. However, I refused to do so, before one and all in the church were gone. Accordingly, I stood up, and directed the parting prayer to be said; and then I urged them all to depart first, for that it was better that I should run the risk, than any of them suffer. But by the time that most of them were gone out, and the rest were following, the Religious Brethren and some of the clergy, who were immediately about me, ran up the steps, and dragged me down. And so, be truth my witness, though the soldiers blockaded the chancel, and were in motion round about the church, the Lord leading, I made my way through them, and by His protection got away unperceived; glorifying God mightily, that I had been enabled to stand by my people, and even to send them out before me, and yet had escaped in safety from the hands of those who sought me." [a]

Attack upon the Church by Syrianus.

Protest of the Alexandrian Catholics.

The formal protest of the Alexandrian Christians against this outrage, which is still extant, gives a stronger and fuller

[a] Athan. Apol. de fug. 24.

statement of the violences attending it. "While we were watching in prayer," they say, "suddenly about midnight, the most noble Duke Syrianus came upon us with a large force of legionaries, with arms, drawn swords, and other military weapons, and their helmets on. The prayers and sacred reading were proceeding, when they assaulted the doors, and, on these being laid open by the force of numbers, he gave the word of command. Upon which, some began to let fly their arrows, and others to sound a charge; and there was a clashing of weapons, and swords glared against the lamplight. Presently, the sacred virgins were slaughtered, numbers trampled down one over another by the rush of the soldiers, and others killed by arrows. Some of the soldiers betook themselves to pillage, and began to strip the females, to whom the very touch of strangers was more terrible than death. Meanwhile, the Bishop sat on his throne, exhorting all to pray . . . He was dragged down, and almost torn to pieces. He swooned away, and became as dead; we do not know how he got away from them, for they were bent upon killing him."[a]

Escape and wanderings of Athanasius.

The first purpose of Athanasius on his escape, was at once to betake himself to Constantius; and he had began his journey to him, when news of the fury, with which the persecution raged throughout the West, changed his intention. A price was set on his head, and every place was diligently searched in the attempt to find him. He retired into the wilderness of the Thebaid, then inhabited by the followers of Paul and Anthony, the first hermits. Driven at length thence, by the activity of his persecutors, he went through a variety of strange adventures, which lasted for the space of six years, till the death of Constantius allowed him to return to Alexandria.

Persecution of the Catholics.

His suffragan bishops did not escape a persecution, which was directed, not against an individual, but against the Christian faith. Thirty of them were banished, ninety were deprived of their churches; and many of the inferior clergy suffered with them. Sickness and death were the ordinary result of such hardships as exile involved; but direct violence in good measure superseded a lingering and uncertain vengeance. George, the representative of the Arians, led the way in a course of horrors, which he carried through all ranks and professions of the Catholic people; and the Jews and heathen of Alexandria, sympathising in his brutality, submitted themselves to his guidance, and enabled him to extend the range of his crimes in every direction. Houses were pillaged, churches were burned, or subjected to the

[a] Athan. Hist. Arian. ad Monach. 81.

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most loathsome profanations, and cemeteries were ransacked. On the week after Whitsuntide, George himself surprised a congregation, which had refused to communicate with him. He brought out some of the consecrated virgins, and threatened them with death by burning, unless they forthwith turned Arians. On perceiving their constancy of purpose, he stripped them of their garments, and beat them so barbarously on the face, that for some time afterwards their features could not be distinguished. Of the men, forty were scourged; some died of their wounds, the rest were banished. This is one out of many notorious facts, publicly declared at the time, and uncontradicted; and which were not merely the unauthorized excesses of an uneducated Cappadocian, but recognized by the Arian body as their own, in a state paper from the Imperial Court, and perpetrated for the maintenance of the peace of the Church, and of a good understanding among all who agreed in the authority of the sacred Scriptures.

Letter from Constantius to the Alexandrians

In the document referred to, which is addressed to the Alexandrians, the infatuated Emperor applauds their conduct in turning from a cheat and impostor, and siding with those who were venerable men, and above all praise. "The majority of the citizens," he continues, "were blinded by the influence of one, who rose from the abyss, darkly misleading those who seek the truth; who had at no time any fruitful exhortation to communicate, but abused the souls of his hearers with frivolous and superficial discussions. . . . That noble personage has not ventured to stand a trial, but has adjudged himself to banishment; whom it is the interest even of the barbarians to get rid of, lest by pouring out his griefs as in a play to the first comer, he persuade some of them to be profane. So we will wish him a fair journey. But for yourselves, only the select few are your equals, or rather, none are worthy of your honours; who are allotted excellence and sense, such as your actions proclaim, celebrated as they are almost through the world. You have roused yourselves from the grovelling things of earth to those of heaven, the most reverend George undertaking to be your leader, a man of all others the most accomplished in such matters; under whose care you will enjoy in days to come honourable hope, and tranquillity at the present time. May all of you hang upon his words as upon a holy anchor, that any cutting and burning may be needless on our part against men of depraved souls, whom we seriously advise to abstain from paying respect to Athanasius, and dismiss from their minds his troublesome garrulity; or such factious men will find themselves involved in extreme peril, which perhaps no skill will be able to avert from them. For it

were absurd indeed, to drive about the pestilent Athanasius from country to country, aiming at his death, though he had ten lives, and not to put a stop to the extravagances of his flatterers and juggling attendants, such as it is a disgrace to name, and whose death has long been determined by the judges. Yet there is a hope of pardon, if they will at length relinquish their offensive proceedings. As to their profligate leader Athanasius, he distracted the harmony of the state, and laid on the most holy men impious and sacrilegious hands." [a]

The ignorance and folly of this remarkable document are at first sight incredible; but to an observant mind the common experience of life brings sufficient proof, that there is nothing too audacious for party spirit to assert, nothing too gross for monarch or inflamed populace to receive.

SECTION. IV.

THE ANOMŒANS.

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IT remains to relate the open disunion and schism between the Semi-arians and the Anomœans. In order to set this clearly before the reader, a brief recapitulation must first be made of the history of the heresy, as already traced; as it has been somewhat obscured in the last section, by the narrative of the political events which attended it.

Recapitulation of the history of the heresy.

The Semi-arian school was the offspring of the ingenious refinements, under which the Eusebians concealed impieties, which the spirit of the times made it inexpedient for them to avow. Here the history of the original Arians is reversed, whether they be regarded in their Meletian or Antiochene connexion. The creed of Semi-arianism preceded the party; i. e. those subtleties, which were too feeble to entangle the shrewdness of the Lucianists, produced their due effect upon the natural subjects of them, viz. men who, with more devotional feeling than the Arians, had less plain sense, and a like deficiency of humility. A Platonic fancifulness made them the victims of an Aristotelic subtlety; and in the philosophising Eusebius and the sophist Asterius, we recognize the appropriate inventors, though hardly the sincere disciples, of the new creed. For a time, the distinction between them and the Eusebians did not openly appear; the creeds put

[a] Athan. Apol. ad Constant. 30.

forth by the party being all, more or less, of a Semi-arian cast, down to the Council of Sirmium inclusive (A. D. 351), in which Photinus was condemned. In the meanwhile the Eusebians, little pleased with the growing dogmatism of members of their own body, fell upon the expedient of confining their confessions to Scripture terms: which, when separated from their context, were of course inadequate to concentrate and ascertain the true doctrine. Hence the formula of the Homoion; which was introduced by Acacius with the express purpose of deceiving or baffling the Semi-arian party. This measure was the more necessary for Eusebian interests, inasmuch as a new variety of the heresy arose in the East at the same time, advocated by Aetius and Eunomius; who, by professing boldly the pure Arian tenet, alarmed Constantius, and threw him back upon Basil, and the other Semi-arians. These Anomœans, however, as they were called, (viz. from maintaining that the οὐσία of the Son was unlike, ἀνόμοιος, the Divine οὐσία,) were actually joined by one portion of the Eusebians, Valens and his rude Occidentals; whose language and temper, not admitting the refinements of Grecian genius, led them to rush from orthodoxy into the most hard and undisguised impiety. And thus the parties stand at the date now before us (A. D. 356—361); Constantius being alternately swayed by Basil, Acacius, and Valens; by his personal attachment to Valens, the talent of Acacius, and his respect for Basil and the Semi-arians.

History of Aetius.

Aetius, the founder of the Anomœans, is a remarkable instance of the struggles and success of a restless and aspiring mind under the pressure of difficulties. He was a native of Antioch; his father who had an office under the governor of the province, dying when he was a child, he was made the servant or slave of a vine-dresser. He was first promoted to the trade of a goldsmith or travelling tinker, according to the conflicting testimony of his friends and enemies. Falling in with an itinerant practitioner in medicine, he acquired so much knowledge of the art, as to assume the character of a physician himself; and, the further study of his new profession introducing him to the disputations of his more learned brethren, he manifested such acuteness and boldness in argument, that he was soon engaged, after the manner of the Sophists, as a paid advocate for such, as wished their own theories exhibited in the most advantageous form. The schools of Medicine were at that time infected with Arianism, and thus introduced him to the science of theology, as well as the profession of a Sophist; giving him a bias towards heresy, which was soon after confirmed by the tuition of Paulinus, Bishop of Antioch. Here he so boldly conducted the principles of Arianism to their legitimate results, as to scandalize the Eusebian succes-

sor of Paulinus; who forced him to retire to Anazarbus, and to resume his former trade of a goldsmith. The energy of Aetius, however, could not be restrained by the obstacles, which birth, education, and decency opposed to its public manifestation. He made acquaintance with a teacher of grammar; and, readily acquiring a smattering of polite literature, he was soon enabled to expose his master's expositions of sacred Scripture before his pupils. A quarrel, as might be expected, ensued; and Aetius was received into the house of the Bishop of Anazarbus, who had been one of the Arian prelates at Nicæa. This man was formerly mentioned, as one of the rudest and most daring among the first assailants of our Lord's divinity. It is probable, however, that, after signing the Homoousion, he had sunk into the characteristic duplicity and worldliness of the Eusebian party; for Aetius is said to have complained, that he was deficient in depth, and, in spite of his hospitality, looked out for another instructor. Such an one he found in the person of a priest of Tarsus, who had been from the first a consistent Arian; and with him he read the Epistles of St. Paul. Returning to Antioch, he became the pupil of Leontius, in the prophetical Scriptures; and, after a while, put himself under the instruction of an Aristotelic sophist of Alexandria. Thus accomplished, he was ordained deacon by Leontius (A. D. 350), who, had been lately raised to the patriarchal See of Antioch. Thus the rise of the Anomœan sect coincides in point of time with the death of Constans, an event already noticed in the history of the Eusebians, as transferring the Empire of the West to Constantius, and, so furthering their splitting into the Homœan and Homœusian factions. Scarcely had Aetius been ordained, when the same notorious irregularities in his carriage, whatever they were, which had more than once led to his expulsion from the lay communion of the Arians, caused his deposition from the diaconate, by the very prelate who had promoted him to it. After this, little is known of him for several years; excepting a dispute, which he held with the Semi-arian Basil, which marks his rising importance. During the interval, he ingratiated himself with Gallus, the brother of Julian; and was implicated in his political offences. Escaping, however, the anger of Constantius, by his comparative insignificance, he retired to Alexandria, and lived for some time in the train of George of Cappadocia, who allowed him to officiate as deacon. Such was at this time the character of the clergy, whom the Arians had introduced into the Syrian Churches, that this despicable adventurer, whose vulgarities were as odious, as his life was extravagant, and his creed blasphemous, had influence to found a sect, which engaged the attention of the learned Semi-arians at

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Ancyra (A. D. 358), and has employed the polemical powers of the orthodox Fathers, Basil, and Gregory Nyssen.

Eunomius.

Eunomius, his most celebrated disciple, was the principal disputant in the controversy. With more learning than Aetius, he was enabled to complete and fortify the Anomœan system, inheriting from his master two peculiarities of character, which belong to his school; the first, a faculty of subtle disputation and hard mathematical reasoning, the second, a fierce, and in one sense an honest, disdain of compromise and dissimulation. These had been the two marks of Arianism at its first rise; and the first associates of Arius, who, after his submission to Constantine, had kept aloof from the Court party in disgust, now joyfully welcomed and joined the Anomœans. The new sect justified their anticipations of its boldness. The same impatience, with which Aetius had received the ambiguous explanations of the Eusebian Bishop of Anazarbus, was expressed by Eunomius for the Acacianism of Eudoxius of Antioch, who in vain endeavoured to tutor him into a less real and systematic profession of the Arian tenets. So far did his party carry their vehemence, as even to re-baptize their Christian converts, as though they had been heathen; and that, not in the case of Catholics only, but, to the great offence of the Eusebians, even of those, whom they proselyted from the other forms of Arianism.[a] Earnestness is always respectable; and, if it be allowable to speak with a sort of moral catachresis, the Anomœans merited on this account, as well as ensured, a success, which a false conciliation must not hope to obtain.

Rise of the Anomœans.

The progress of events rapidly carried them forward upon the scene of ecclesiastical politics. Valens, the self-constituted organ of the Western Church, was seconded in his patronage of them by the eunuchs of the Court; of whom Eusebius, the Grand Chamberlain, had unlimited sway over the weak mind of the Emperor. The concessions of Liberius and Hosius, furnished an additional countenance to Arianism, being misrepresented as actual advances towards the heretical system. The inartificial cast of the Western theology, which scarcely recognized any middle hypothesis between that of the Homoousion and pure Arianism, strengthened the opinion that those, who had abandoned the one, must in fact have embraced the other. And, as if this were not enough, it appears that an Anomœan creed was circulated in the East, under the pretended sanction of the two prelates.[b] Events in the Churches of Antioch and Jerusalem furthered the schism between the Semi-arians and the Anomœans. Leontius of

[a] Epiph. Hær. lxxvi. fin. Bingham xi. 1. § 10.
[b] Petav. tom. ii. i. 9, § 6.

Antioch dying (A. D. 357), the eunuchs of the Court contrived to place Eudoxius in his see, a man of restless and intriguing temper, and opposed to the Semi-arians. Acacius, quarrelling with Cyril of Jerusalem, was easily persuaded to join the attack, which was organizing against the party of the latter. A Council was held at Antioch (A. D. 358), which was attended by Acacius, Eudoxius, Eunomius, Aetius, and others of the baser sort; in which, without venturing on the distinct Anomœan doctrine, the second creed of Sirmium, which Hosius had signed, was received and confirmed, and a letter of thanks and congratulations was written to the party of Valens, for having brought the troubles of the West to so satisfactory a termination.

Homœan Council of Antioch

Mention has already been made of one George, a presbyter of Alexandria; who, being among the earliest supporters of Arius, was degraded by Alexander, but, being received by the Eusebians into the Church of Antioch, became at length Bishop of Laodicea. George was justly offended at the promotion of Eudoxius, without the consent of himself and Mark of Arethusa, the most considerable Bishops of Syria; and, at this juncture, took part against the combination of Homœans and Anomœans, at Antioch, who had just published their assent to the creed of Sirmium. Falling in with some clergy whom Eudoxius had excommunicated, he sent letters by them to Macedonius, Basil of Ancyra, and other leaders of the Semi-arians, intreating them to raise a protest against the proceedings of the Council of Antioch, and so to oblige Eudoxius to separate himself from Aetius and the Anomœans. This remonstrance produced its effect; and, under pretence of the dedication of a church, a Council was immediately held by the Semi-arian party at Ancyra (A. D. 358), in which the Anomœan heresy was condemned. The Synodal letter, which they published, professed to be grounded on the Semi-arian creeds of the Dedication (A. D. 341), of Philippopolis (A. D. 347), and of Sirmium (A. D. 351), when Photinus was condemned and deposed. It is a valuable document, even as a defence of orthodoxy; its error consisting in its obstinate rejection of the Nicene Homoousion, the sole practical bulwark of the Catholic faith against the misrepresentations of heresy, against a sort of tritheism on the one hand, and a degraded conception of the Son and Spirit on the other.

Semi-arian Council of Ancyra

The two parties thus at issue, appealed to Constantius. That feeble Prince had lately sanctioned the almost Acacian creed of Valens, which Hosius had been compelled to subscribe, when the deputation from Antioch arrived at Sirmium; and he readily gave his assent to their confession, which was professedly but an echo of the former. Scarcely had he done so, when the Semi-arians made their appearance from Ancyra,

Semi-arian Creed of Sirmium

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with Basil at their head; and succeeded so well in representing its dangerous character, that, recalling the messenger who had been sent off to Antioch, he held the Conference, of which a notice was given in the last section, in which a Semi-arian creed was imposed on all parties, Eudoxius and Valens, the representatives of the Eusebians there present, being compelled to join with the orthodox Liberius, in a creed which Basil compiled from the creeds against Paulus of Samosata, and Photinus (A. D. 264. 351), and the creed of Lucian, published by the Council of the Dedication (A. D. 341). Yet in spite of the learning, and personal respectability of the Semi-arians, which at the moment exerted this strong influence over the mind of Constantius, the dexterity of the Eusebians in disputation and intrigue was ultimately successful. Though seventy Bishops of their party were immediately banished, these were in a few months re-instated by the capricious Emperor, who from that time inclined first to the Acacian or Homœan, and then to the open Anomœan or pure Arian doctrine; and before his death, A. D. 361, he had received baptism from the hands of Euzoius, one of the original associates of Arius, then recently placed in the see of Antioch.— The history of this change, with the Councils attending it, will bring us to the close of this chapter.

Semi-arians intrusted by the Emperor with the management of a General Council.

The Semi-arians, elated with their triumph, obtained the Emperor's consent for an Œcumenical Council, in which the faith of the Christian Church should definitively be declared. A meeting of the whole of Christendom had not been imagined, except in the instance of the Council of Sardica, since the Nicene; and the Sardican itself had been convoked principally to decide upon the charges urged against Athanasius, and not to open the doctrinal question. Indeed it is evident, that none but the heterodox party, now dominant, could consistently debate an article of belief, which the united testimony of the Churches of the East and West had once for all settled at Nicæa. While Basil laboured for the accomplishment of this purpose, the Eusebians, on the other hand, headed by Eudoxius and Valens, perceiving that it would be more for their own interest that the prelates of the East and West should not meet in the same place, (two bodies being more manageable than one,) exerted themselves so strenuously with the assistance of the eunuchs of the palace, that at last it was determined, that, while the Orientals met at Seleucia in Isauria, the Occidental Council should be held at Ariminum, in Italy. Next, a previous Conference was held at Sirmium, in order to determine on the creed to be presented to the bipartite Council; and here again the Eusebians gained an advantage, though not at once to the extent of their wishes. Warned by the late indignation of Constantius against the Anomœan tenet,

Intrigues of the Eusebians.

they did not attempt to rescue it from his displeasure; but they struggled for the adoption of the Acacian Homoion, which the Emperor had already received and abandoned, and they actually effected the adoption of the *κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον, κατὰ τὰς γραφάς*,—a phrase in which the Semi-arians indeed included their *κατ' οὐσίαν ὅμοιον* or Homoiousion, but which did not necessarily refer to *substance* or *nature* at all. Under these circumstances the two Councils met in the autumn of A. D. 359, under the nominal superintendence of the Semi-arians; but on the Eusebian side, the sharp-witted Acacius undertaking to deal with the disputatious Greeks, the overbearing and cruel Valens with the plainer Latins.

Council of Seleucia.

About 150 Bishops of the Eastern Church assembled at Seleucia, of whom not above forty were Eusebians. Far the greater number were Semi-arians; the Egyptian prelates alone, of whom but twelve or thirteen were present, displaying themselves, as at the first, the bold and faithful adherents of the Homoousion. It was soon evident that the forced reconciliation which Constantius had imposed on the two parties at Sirmium, was of no avail in their actual deliberations. On each side an alteration of the proposed formula was demanded. In spite of the sanction given by Basil and Mark to the *κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον*, the majority of their partizans would be contented with nothing short of the definite *κατ' οὐσίαν ὅμοιον*, or Homoiousion, which left no opening, (as they considered,) to evasion; and in consequence proposed to return to Lucian's creed, adopted by the Council of the Dedication. Acacius, on the other hand, not satisfied with the advantage he had gained in the preliminary meeting at Sirmium, where the mention of the *οὐσία* or *substance* was dropped, (which had but lately been imposed by Constantius on all parties, in the formulary which Liberius signed,) proposed a creed in which the Homoousion and Homoiousion, were condemned, the Anomoion anathematized, as the source of confusion and schism, and his own Homoion adopted; and when he found himself unable to accomplish his purpose, not waiting for the formal sentence of deposition, which the Semi-arians proceeded to pronounce upon himself and eight others, he set off to Constantinople, where the Emperor then was, hoping in the absence of Basil and his party to gain what had been denied him at Sirmium. It so happened, however, that his object had been effected even before his arrival; for, a similar quarrel having resulted from the meeting at Ariminum, and deputies from the rival parties having similarly been despatched to Constantius, a conference had taken place at a city called Nice or Nicæa, in the neighbourhood of Hadrianople, and an emendated creed adopted, in which, not only the Semi-arian safeguard of the *κατὰ πάντα* was omitted, and the Ousia condemned, but even

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the word Hypostasis also, on the ground of its being a refinement on Scripture. So much had been already gained by the influence of Valens, when the arrival of Acacius at Constantinople, gave fresh activity to the Eusebian party.

Council of Constantinople.

A Council was summoned of the neighbouring Bishops, principally of those of Bithynia. Constantius was easily persuaded to believe of Basil, what had before been asserted of Athanasius, that he was the impediment to the settlement of the question, and the tranquillity of the Church. Various charges of a civil and ecclesiastical nature were alleged against him and other Semi-arians, as formerly against Athanasius, with what degree of truth it is impossible at this day to determine; and a sentence of deposition was issued against them. Cyril of Jerusalem, Eleusius of Cyzicus, Eustathius of Sebaste, and Macedonius of Constantinople, were in the number of those who suffered with Basil; Macedonius being succeeded by Eudoxius, who, being thus seated in the first see of the East, became the principal stay of Arianism under the Emperor Valens.

This triumph of the Eusebian party took place in the beginning of A. D. 360; by which time the Council of Ariminum had been brought to a conclusion. To it we must now turn our attention.

Council of Ariminum.

The Latin Council had commenced its deliberations, before the Orientals had assembled at Seleucia; yet it did not bring them to a close till the end of the year. The struggle between the Eusebians and their opponents had been so much the more stubborn in the West, in proportion as the latter were more numerous there, and further removed from Arianism, and Valens more unscrupulous and armed with fuller powers. Four hundred Bishops were collected at Ariminum, of whom but eighty were Arians; and the civil officer, to whom Constantius had committed the superintendence of their proceedings, had orders not to let them stir out of the city, till they should agree upon a confession of faith. At the opening of the Council, Valens, Ursacius, Germinius, Auxentius, Caius, and Demophilus, the Imperial Commissioners, had presented to the assembly the formula of the *κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον*, agreed upon in the preliminary conference at Sirmium; and demanded, that. putting aside all strange and mysterious terms of theology, it should be at once adopted by the assembled Fathers. They had received for answer, that the Latins determined to adhere to the formulary of Nicæa; and that, as a first step in their present deliberations, it was necessary that all present should forthwith anathematize, all heresies and innovations, beginning with that of Arius. On their refusal, they had been promptly condemned and deposed; and a deputation of ten was sent from the Council to Constantius, to

acquaint him with the result of its deliberations. The issue of this mission to the Court, to which Valens opposed one from his own party, has been already related. Constantius, with a view of wearing out the Latin Fathers, pretended that the barbarian war required his immediate attention, and delayed the consideration of the question till the beginning of October, several months after the opening of the Council; and then, frightening the Catholic commissioners into compliance, he effected at Nice the adoption of the Homœan creed, and sent it back to Ariminum.

Its disgraceful termination

The termination of the Council there assembled was disgraceful to its members, but more so to the Emperor himself. Distressed by their long confinement, impatient at their absence from their respective dioceses, and apprehensive of the approaching winter, they began to waver. At first, indeed, they refused to communicate with their own apostate deputies; but these, almost in self-defence, were active and successful in bringing over others to their new opinions. A threat was held out by Taurus, the Prætorian Prefect, who superintended the discussions, that fifteen of the most obstinate should be sent into banishment; and Valens was importunate in the use of such arguments and explanations, as were likely to effect his object. The Prefect conjured them with tears to abandon an unfruitful obstinacy, to reflect on the length of their past confinement, the discomfort of their situation, the rigors of the winter, and to consider, that there was but one possible termination of the difficulty, which lay with themselves, not with him. Valens, on the other hand, affirmed that the Eastern Bishops had abandoned the Ousia; and he demanded of those who still stood their ground, what objection they could make to the Scriptural creed proposed to them, and whether, for the sake of a word, they would be the authors of a schism between Eastern and Western Christendom. He affirmed, that the danger apprehended by the Catholics was but chimerical; that he and his party condemned Arius and Arianism as strongly as themselves, and were only desirous of avoiding a word, which confessedly is not in Scripture, and had in past time been productive of much scandal. Then, to put his sincerity to the proof, he began with a loud voice to anathematize the maintainers of the Arian blasphemies in succession; and he concluded by declaring, that he believed the Word to be God, begotten of God before all time, and not in the number of the creatures, and that whoever should say that He was a creature as others, was anathema. The foregoing history of the heresy has sufficiently explained how the Arians evaded the force of these strong declarations; but the inexperienced Latins did not detect their insincerity. Satisfied, and glad to be re-

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leased, they gave up the Homoousion, and signed the formula of the Homoion; and scarcely had they separated, when Valens, as might be expected, boasted of his victory, arguing that the faith of Nicæa had been condemned by the very circumstance of his being allowed to confess, that the Son was "not a creature as others," and so to imply, that, though not like *other* creatures, still He was created. Thus ended this celebrated Council; the result of which is well characterized in the lively description of Jerome: "Ingemuit totus orbis, et Arianum se esse miratus est."

Triumph of [Se]mi-arians [an]d Ano[mœ]ans.

In the proceedings attendant on the Councils of Seleucia and Ariminum, the Eusebians had skilfully gained two important objects, by means of unimportant concessions on their part. They had sacrificed Aetius and his Anomoion; and effected in exchange the disgrace of the Semi-arians as well as of the Catholics, and the establishment of the Homoion, the truly characteristic symbol of a party, who, as caring little for the *sense* of Scripture, found an excuse and an indulgence of their unconcern, in a pretended maintenance of the letter. As to the wretched mountebank just mentioned, whose profaneness was so abominable, as to obtain for him the title of the Atheist, he was formally condemned in the Constantinopolitan Council (A. D. 360), in which the Semi-arian Basil, Macedonius, and their associates, had been deposed. During the discussions which attended it, Eleusius, one of the latter party, laid before the Emperor an Anomœan creed, which he ascribed to Eudoxius. The latter, when questioned, disowned it; and named Aetius as its author, who was immediately summoned. Introduced into the Imperial presence, he was unable to divine, in spite of his natural acuteness, whether the Emperor was pleased or displeased with the composition; and, hazarding an acknowledgment of it, he drew down on himself the full indignation of Constantius, who banished him into Cilicia, and obliged his patron Eudoxius to anathematize both the confession in question, and all the positions of the pure Arian heresy. Such was the fall of Aetius, at the time of the triumph of the Eusebians; but soon afterwards he was promoted to the episcopate, (under what circumstances is unknown,) and was favourably noticed, as a former friend of Gallus, by the Emperor Julian, who gave him a territory in the Island of Mitelene.

[...]ment of [...]och

Eunomius, his disciple, escaped the jealousy of Constantius through the good offices of Eudoxius, and was advanced to the Bishoprick of Cyzicus; but, being impatient of dissimulation, he soon fell into disgrace, and was banished. The death of the Emperor took place at the end of A. D. 361; his last acts evincing a further approximation to the unmitigated heresy of Arius. At a Council held at Antioch in the course of that

year, he sanctioned the Anomœan doctrine in its most revolting form; and shortly before his decease, received the sacrament of baptism from Euzoius, the personal friend and original associate of Arius himself.

CHAPTER V.

THE COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA.

SECTION I.

THE QUESTION OF THE ARIANIZERS.

THE accession of Julian was followed by a general restoration of the banished Bishops; and all eyes throughout Christendom were at once turned towards Alexandria, as the Church, which, by its sufferings and its indomitable spirit, had claim to be the arbiter of doctrine, and the guarantee of peace to the Catholic world. Athanasius, as the story goes, was, on the death of his persecutor, suddenly found on his episcopal throne in one of the Churches of Alexandria;[a] a legend, happily expressive of the unwearied activity and almost ubiquity of that extraordinary man, who, while a price was set on his head, mingled unperceived in the proceedings at Seleucia and Ariminum, and directed the movements of his fellow-labourers by his writings, when he was debarred the exercise of his dexterity in debate, and his persuasive energy in private conversation. He was soon joined by his fellow-exile, Eusebius of Vercellæ; Lucifer, who had journeyed with the latter from the Upper Thebaid, on his return to the West, having left him for Antioch on business which will presently be explained. Meanwhile, no time was lost in holding a Council at Alexandria (A. D. 362), on the general state of the Church.

Policy of Julian in recalling the Bishops from exile.

The object of Julian in recalling the banished Bishops, was the renewal of those dissensions, by means of toleration, which Constantius had endeavoured to terminate by force. He knew these prelates to be of various opinions, Semi-arians, Macedonians, Anomœans, as well as orthodox; and, determining to be neuter himself, he waited with the satisfaction

[a] Cave, Life of Athan. x. 9.

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of an Eclectic for the event; being persuaded, that Christianity could not withstand the shock of parties, not less discordant, and far more zealous, than the sects of philosophy. It is even said that he "invited to his palace the leaders of the hostile sects, that he might enjoy the agreeable spectacle of their furious encounters." [a] But, in indulging such anticipations of overthrowing Christianity, he but displayed his own ignorance of the foundation, on which it was built. It could scarcely be conceived, that an unbeliever, educated among heretics, would understand the vigour and indestructibility of the true Christian spirit; and Julian fell into the error, to which in all ages men of the world are exposed, of mistaking whatever shows itself on the surface of the Apostolic Community, its prominences and irregularities, all that is extravagant, and all that is transitory, for the real moving principle and life of the system. It is trying times which manifest the saints of God; but they live notwithstanding, and support the Church in their generation, though they remain in their obscurity. In the days of Arianism, indeed, they were in their measure, revealed to the world; still to such as Julian, they were unavoidably unknown, both in respect to their numbers and their divine excellence. The thousand of silent believers, who worshipped in spirit and in truth, were obscured by the tens and twenties of the various heretical factions, whose clamorous addresses besieged the Imperial Court; and Athanasius would be pourtrayed to his imagination after the picture of his own preceptor, the time-serving and unscrupulous Eusebius. The event of his experiment refuted the opinion which led to it. The impartial toleration of all religious persuasions, malicious as was its intent, did but contribute to the ascendancy of the right faith; that faith, which is the only true aliment of the human mind, which can be held as a principle as well as an opinion, and which influences the heart to suffer and to labour for its sake.

Council of Alexandria.

Of the subjects which engaged the notice of the Alexandrian Council, two only need here be mentioned; the treatment to be pursued towards the bishops, who had arianized in the reign of Constantius, and the settlement of the theological sense of the word Hypostasis. And here, of the former of these.

Prudence of Athanasius.

Instances have already occurred, of the line of conduct pursued by Athanasius in ecclesiastical matters. Deliberate apostacy and systematic heresy were the objects of his implacable opposition; but in his behaviour towards individuals, and in his judgment of the inconsistent, whether in

[a] Gibbon, ch. xxiii.

conduct or creed, he evinces an admirable tenderness and forbearance. Not only did he reluctantly abandon his associate, the unfortunate Marcellus, on his sabellianizing, but he even makes favourable notice of the Semi-arians, hostile to him both in word and deed, who rejected the orthodox test, and had confirmed against him personally at Philippopolis, the verdict of the commission at the Mareotis. When prelates of his own party, as Liberius of Rome, were induced to excommunicate him, far from resenting it, he speaks of them with a temper and candour, which, as displayed in the heat of controversy, evidences an enlarged prudence, to say nothing of Christian charity.[a] It is this union of opposite excellences, firmness with discrimination and discretion, which is the characteristic praise of Athanasius; as well as of several of his predecessors in the See of Alexandria. The hundred years, preceding his episcopate, had given scope to the enlightened zeal of Dionysius, and the patient resoluteness of Alexander. On the other hand, when we look around at the other more conspicuous champions of orthodoxy of his time, much as we must revere and bless their memory, yet as regards this maturity and completeness of character, they are far inferior to Athanasius. The noble-minded Hilary was intemperate in his language, and assailed Constantius with an asperity unbecoming a dutiful subject. The fiery Bishop of Cagliari, exemplary as is his self-devotion, so openly showed his desire for martyrdom, as to lead the Emperor to exercise towards him a contemptuous forbearance. Eusebius of Vercellæ negociated in the Councils, with a subtlety bordering on Arian insincerity. From these deficiencies of character Athanasius was exempt; and on the occasion, which has given rise to these remarks, he had especial need of the combination of gifts, which has made his name immortal in the Church.

Arianizers through ignorance.

The question of the arianizing bishops was one of much difficulty. They were in possession of the Churches; and, could not be deposed, if at all, without the risk of a permanent schism. It is evident, moreover, from the foregoing narrative, how many had been betrayed into an approval of the Arian opinions, without understanding or acting upon them. This was particularly the case in the West, where threats and ill-usage, had been more or less substituted for those fallacies, which the Latin language scarcely admitted. And even in the remote Greek Churches, there was much of that devout and unsuspecting simplicity, which was the easy sport of the supercilious sophistry of the Arians. This was

[a] Athan. de Syn 41. Apol contr. Arian. 89. Hist. Arian. ad Monach 41, 42.

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the case with the father of Gregory Nazianzen; who, being persuaded to receive the Acacian confession of Constantinople, (A. D. 359, 360,) on the ground of its unmixed *scripturalness*, found himself suddenly deserted by a large portion of his flock, and was extricated from the charge of heresy, only by the dexterity of his learned son. Indeed, to many of the arianizing bishops, may be applied the remarks, which Hilary makes upon the laity subjected to Arian teaching; that their own piety enabled them to interpret expressions religiously, which were originally invented as evasions of the orthodox doctrine.[a]

Arianizers of necessity.

And even in parts of the East, where a clear perception of the difference between truth and error existed, it must have been an extreme difficulty to such of the orthodox as lived among Arians, to determine, in what way best to accomplish duties, which were in opposition to each other. The same obligation of Christian unity, which was the apology for the laity, who remained, as at Antioch, in communion with an Arian bishop, would lead to a similar recognition of his authority by his brother-bishops, who were ecclesiastically subordinate to him. Thus Cyril of Jerusalem, who was in no sense an Anomœan or Eusebian, received consecration from the hands of his metropolitan Acacius; and St. Basil, surnamed the Great, the vigorous champion of orthodoxy against the Emperor Valens, attended the Council of Constantinople (A. D. 359, 360), as a deacon, in the train of his namesake Basil, the leader of the Semi-arians.

Arianizers without excuse.

On the other hand, it was scarcely safe to leave the deliberate heretic in possession of his spiritual power. Many bishops too were but the creatures of the times, raised up from the lowest of the people, and deficient in the elementary qualifications of learning and sobriety. Even those, who had but conceded to the violence of others, were the objects of a just suspicion; since, frankly as they now joined the Athanasians, they had already shown as much interest and reliance in the opposite party.

Decree of the Co[illegible]ning

Swayed by these latter considerations, some of the assembled prelates advocated the adoption of harsh measures towards the Arianizers, considering that their deposition was due both to the injured dignity, and to the safety of the Catholic Church. Athanasius, however, proposed more temperate measures; and his influence was sufficient to triumph over the excitement of mind which commonly accompanies a deliverance from persecution. A decree was passed, that such bishops as had communicated with the Arians through

[a] "Sanctiores sunt aures plebis," he says, "quàm corda sacerdotum." Bull. Defens. epilog.

weakness or surprise, should be recognised in their respective sees, on their signing the Nicene formulary; but that those, who had publicly defended the heresy, should only be admitted to lay-communion. No act could evince more clearly than this, that it was no party interest, but the ascendancy of the orthodox doctrine itself, which was the aim of the Athanasians. They allowed the power of the Church to remain in the hands of men indifferent to the interests of themselves, on their return to that faith, which they had denied through fear; and their ability to force on the Arianizers this condition, evidences what they might have done, had they chosen to make an appeal against the more culpable of them to the clergy and laity of their respective churches, and to create and send out bishops to supply their places. But they desired peace, as soon as the interests of truth were secured; and their magnanimous decision was forthwith adopted by Councils held at Rome, in Spain, Gaul, and Achaia. The state of Asia was less satisfactory. The fortunes of the Church of Antioch will immediately engage our attention. Phrygia and the Proconsulate were in the hands of the Semi-arians and Macedonians; Thrace and Bithynia, controlled by the Imperial Metropolis, were the strong-hold of the Eusebian or pure Arian faction.

Unsatisfactory state of the East

Of Syria.

Of Asia Minor

Of Constantinople.

The history of the Church of Antioch affords an illustration of the general disorders of the East at this period, and of the intention of the sanative measure passed at Alexandria respecting them. Eustathius, its Bishop, one of the principal Nicene champions, had been an early victim of Eusebian malice, being deposed on calumnious charges, A. D. 331. A series of Arian prelates succeeded; some of whom, Stephen, Leontius, and Eudoxius, have been commemorated in the foregoing pages. The Catholics of Antioch had disagreed among themselves, how to act under these circumstances. Some, both clergy and laity, refusing the communion of heretical teachers, had holden together for the time, as a distinct body, till the cause of truth should regain its natural supremacy; while others had admitted the usurping succession, which the Imperial will forced upon the Church. When Athanasius passed through Antioch on his return from his second exile (A. D. 348), he had acknowledged the seceders, from a respect for their orthodoxy, and for the rights of clergy and laity in the election of a bishop. Yet it cannot be denied, that men of zeal and boldness were found among the Arianizers. Two laymen, Flavian and Diodorus, protested with spirit against the heterodoxy of the crafty Leontius, and kept alive an orthodox party in the midst of the Eusebian communion.

The Church of Antioch

On the translation of Eudoxius to Constantinople, the year before the death of Constantius, an accident occurred, which,

Meletius conforms to orthodoxy.

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skilfully improved, might have healed the incipient schism among the Trinitarians. Scarcely had Meletius, the new prelate of the Eusebians, taken possession of his see, when he conformed to the Catholic faith. History describes him as gifted with remarkable sweetness and benevolence of disposition. Men thus characterized are often deficient in sensibility, in their practical judgment of heresy; which they abhor indeed in the abstract, yet countenance in the case of their friends, from a false charitableness; which leads them, not merely to hope the best, but to overlook the guilt of opposing the truth, where the fact is undeniable. Meletius had been brought up in the communion of the Arians; a misfortune, in which nearly all the Oriental Christians of his day were involved. Being considered as one of their party, he had been promoted by them to the see of Sebaste, in Armenia; but, taking offence at the conduct of his flock, he had retired to Berœa, in Syria. During the residence of the Court at Antioch, A. D. 361, the election of the new prelate of that see came on; and the choice of both Arians and Arianizing orthodox fell on Meletius. Acacius was the chief mover in this business. He had lately established the principle of liberalism at Constantinople, where a condemnation had been passed on the use of words not found in Scripture, in confessions of faith; and he could scarcely have selected a more suitable instrument, as it appeared, of extending its influence, than a prelate, who united purity of life and amiableness of temper, to a seeming indifference to the distinctions between doctrinal truth and error.

Meletius banished.

On the new Patriarch's arrival at Antioch, he was escorted by the court bishops, and his own clergy and laity, to the cathedral. Desirous of solemnising the occasion, the Emperor himself had condescended to give the text, on which the assembled prelates were to comment. It was the celebrated passage from the Proverbs, in which Origen has piously detected, and the Arians perversely stifled, the great article of our faith; "the Lord hath created [possessed] Me in the beginning of His ways, before His works of old." George of Laodicea, who, on the departure of Eudoxius, had rejoined the Eusebians, opened the discussion with a dogmatic explanation of the words. Acacius followed with that ambiguity of language, which was the characteristic of his school. At length the Patriarch arose, and to the surprise of the assembly, with a subdued manner, and in measured words, avoiding indeed the Nicene Homoousion, but accurately fixing the meaning of his expressions, confessed the true Catholic tenet, so long exiled from the throne and altars of Antioch. A scene followed, such as might be expected from the excitable temper of the Orientals. The congregation received his discourse

with shouts of joy; when the Arian archdeacon of the church running up, placed his hand before his mouth to prevent his speaking; on which Meletius thrust out his hand in sight of the people, and raising first three fingers, and then one, symbolized the great truth which he was unable to utter.[a] The consequences of this bold confession might be expected. Meletius was banished, and a fresh prelate appointed, Euzoius, the friend of Arius. But an important advantage resulted to the orthodox cause by this occurrence; the Catholics and heretics were no longer united in one communion, and the latter were thrown more into the position of schismatics, who had rejected their own bishop. Such was the state of things, when the death of Constantius occasioned the return of Meletius, and the convocation of the Council of Alexandria, in which his case was considered.

The Council recognizes Meletius.

The course to be pursued in this matter by the general Church was evident. There were now in Antioch, besides the heretical party, two communions professing orthodoxy, of which the Protestant body was without a head, Eustathius having died some years before. It was the obvious duty of the Council, to recommend the Eustathians to recognize Meletius, and to join in his communion, whatever original intrusion there might be in the episcopal succession from which he received his orders, and whatever might have been his own previous errors of doctrine. The general principle of restoration, which they had made the rule of their conduct towards the Arianizers, led them to this. Accordingly, a commission was appointed to proceed to Antioch, and to exert their endeavours to bring the dissension to a happy termination.

Lucifer defeats its intentions.

Their charitable intentions, however, had been already frustrated by the unfortunate interference of Lucifer. This Latin Bishop, strenuous in contending for the faith, had little of the knowledge of human nature, or of the dexterity in negociation, necessary for the management of so delicate a point, as that which he had taken upon himself to settle. He had gone straight to Antioch, when Eusebius of Vercellæ proceeded to Alexandria; and, on the Alexandrian commission arriving at the former city, the mischief was done, and the mediation ineffectual. Indulging, instead of overcoming, the natural reluctance of the Eustathians to submit to Meletius, Lucifer had been induced, with the assistance of two others, to consecrate a separate head for their communion, and by so doing re-animate a dissention, which had run its course and was dying of itself. The result of this indiscretion was the rise of an additional, instead of the termination of the existing schism. Eusebius, who was at the head of the commission,

[a] Soz. iv. 28.

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retired from Antioch in disgust. Lucifer, offended at becoming the object of censure, separated first from Eusebius, and at length from all who acknowledged the conforming Arianizers. He founded a sect, which was called after his name, and lasted about fifty years.

Schism at Antioch.

As to the schism at Antioch, it was not terminated till the time of Chrysostom. Athanasius and the Egyptian Churches continued in communion with the Eustathians. Much as they had desired and exerted themselves for a reconciliation between the parties, they could not but recognize, while it existed, that body which had all along suffered and laboured with themselves. And certainly the intercourse, which Meletius held with the unprincipled Acacius, in the Antiochene Council the following year, was not adapted to make them repent their determination.[a] The Occidentals and the Churches of Cyprus followed their example. The Eastern Christians, on the contrary, having for the most part themselves arianized, took part with the Meletians. At length St. Chrysostom successfully exerted his influence with the Egyptian and Western Christians in behalf of Flavian, the successor of Meletius; a prelate, it must be admitted, of unsatisfactory character, though he had acted a bold part with Diodorus; afterwards Bishop of Tarsus, in resisting the insidious attempts of Leontius to secularize the Church.

SECTION II.

THE QUESTION OF THE HYPOSTASIS.

SECTION II.

THE Council of Alexandria was also concerned in determining a doctrinal question; and here too it exercised a virtual mediation between the rival parties in the Antiochene Church.

The idea of Personality.

The word *Person*, which we venture to use in speaking of those three distinct manifestations of Himself, which it has pleased Almighty God to give us, is in its philosophical sense too wide for our meaning. Its essential signification, as applied to ourselves, is that of an *individual intelligent agent*, answering to the Greek ὑπόστασις, or *reality*. On the other hand, if we restrict it to its etymological sense of persona or πρόσωπον, i. e. *character*, it evidently means less than the Scripture doctrine, which we wish to ascertain by it; denoting merely certain outward expressions of the Supreme Being

[a] Besides, it seems that Meletius refused to communicate with Athanasius. vit. S. Basil p. cix. ed. Benedict.

relatively to ourselves, which are of an accidental and variable nature. The statements of Revelation then lie between this internal and external view of the Divine Essence, between Tritheism, and what is popularly called Unitarianism.

In the choice of difficulties, then, between words which say too much and too little, the Latins, looking at the popular and practical side of the doctrine, selected a term expressive of the external and defective notion of the Son and Spirit, and called Them Personæ, or (literally) Characters; with no intention, however, of infringing on the doctrine of Their completeness and reality, as distinct from the Father, but aiming at the whole truth, as nearly as their language would permit. The Greeks, on the other hand, with their instinctive anxiety for philosophical accuracy of expression, secured the notion of Their existence in Themselves, by calling them Hypostases or Realities; for which they considered, with some reason, that they had the sanction of the Apostle. (Heb. i. 3.) Moreover, they were led to insist upon this internal view of the doctrine, by the prevalence of Sabellianism in the East in the third century; a heresy, which professed to resolve the distinction of the Three Persons, into a mere distinction of character. Hence the prominence given to the τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις, (the Three Realities,) in the creeds of the Semi-arians, (e. g. Lucian's and Basil's, A. D. 341—358,) who were the especial antagonists of Sabellius, Marcellus, Photinus, and kindred heretics. It was this praiseworthy jealousy of the Sabellians, which obliged the Greeks to lay stress upon the doctrine of the ἐνυπόστατος λόγος, (the Word in real existence,) lest the bare use of the terms, Word, Voice, Power, Wisdom, and Radiance, in designating our Lord, should lead to a forgetfulness of His Personality. At the same time, the word οὐσία (substance) was adopted by them, to express the simple individuality of the Divine Nature, to which the Greeks, as scrupulously as the Latins, referred the separate Personalities of the Son and Spirit.

expressed by the Latins by Persona; by the Greeks by Hypostasis.

Thus the two great divisions of Christendom, rested satisfied each with its own theology, agreeing in doctrine, though differing in the expression of it. But, when the course of the detestable controversy, which Arius had raised, introduced the Latins to the phraseology of the Greeks, accustomed to the word Persona, they were startled at the doctrine of the Three Hypostases; a term, which they could not translate except by the word *substantia*, and therefore considered synonymous with the Greek οὐσία, and which, in matter of fact, had led to Arianism on the one hand, and Tritheism on the other. And the Orientals, on their part, were suspicious of the Latin maintenance of the One Hypostasis, and Three Personæ; as if such a formula tended to Sabellianism.

Consequent misunderstanding between them.

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Difficulties of the history.

This is but a general account of the difference between the Eastern and Western theology; for it is difficult to ascertain, when the language of the Greeks first became fixed and consistent. Some eminent critics have considered, that οὐσία was not discriminated from ὑπόστασις, till the Council which has given rise to these remarks. Others maintain, that the distinction between them is recognized in the ἐξ οὐσίας ἢ ὑποστάσεως of the Nicene Anathema; and these certainly have the authority of St. Basil on their side.[a] Without attempting an opinion on a point, obscure in itself, and not of chief importance in the controversy, the existing difference between the Greeks and Latins, at the times of the Alexandrian Council, shall here be stated.

Usage of the Asiatics at the date of the Council;

At this date, the formula of the Three Hypostases seems, as a matter of fact, to have been more or less a characteristic of the Arians. At the same time, it was held by the orthodox of Asia, who had communicated with them; i. e. interpreted by them, of course, in the orthodox sense which it now bears. This will account for St. Basil's explanation of the Nicene Anathema; it being natural in an Asiatic Christian, who seems (unavoidably) to have arianized[b] for the first thirty years of his life, to imagine, (whether rightly or not,) that he perceived in it the distinction between οὐσία and ὑπόστασις, which he himself had been accustomed to recognize. Again, in the schism at Antioch, which has been lately narrated, the party of Meletius, which had so long arianized, maintained the Three Hypostases, in opposition to the Eustathians, who, as a body, agreed with the Latins, and had in consequence been accused by the Arians of Sabellianism. Moreover, this connexion of the Oriental orthodox with the Semi-arians, partly accounts for some apparent tritheisms of the former; a heresy into which the latter certainly did fall.[c]

of Athanasius;

Athanasius, on the other hand, without caring to be uniform in his use of terms, about which the orthodox differed, favours the Latin usage, speaking of the Supreme Being as one Hypostasis, i. e. substance. And in this he differed from the previous writers of his own Church; who, not having experience of the Latin theology, nor of the perversions of Arianism, adopt, not only the word ὑπόστασις, but, (what is stronger,) the

[a] Vid. Petav. Theol. Dogm. tom. ii. lib. iv. Bull. Defens. Fid. Nic.

[b] i. e. Semi-arianized.

[c] Petav. i. fin. iv. 13. § 3. The illustration of three men, as being under the same nature, (which is the ground of the accusation which some writers have brought against Gregory Nyssen and others, vid. Cudw. iv. 36. p. 597. 601. &c. Petav. iv. 7. and 10. Gibbon, ch. xxi.) was but an illustration of a particular point in the doctrine, and directed against the ἑτερουσιότης of the Arians. It is no evidence of tritheism. vid. Petav. iv. 13 § 6—16. and tom. i ii 1

words φύσις and οὐσία, to denote the separate Personality of the Son and Spirit.

[illegible] of the Latins.

As to the Latins, it is said that, when Hosius came to Alexandria before the Nicene Council, he was desirous that some explanation should be made about the Hypostasis; though nothing was settled in consequence. But, soon after the Council of Sardica, an addition was made to its confession, which in Theodoret runs as follows: "Whereas the heretics maintain that the Hypostases of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are distinct and separate, we declare that according to the Catholic faith there is but one Hypostasis, (which they call Ousia,) of the Three; and the Hypostasis of the Son is the same as the Father's." [a]

Decision of the Council

Such was the state of the controversy, if it may so be called, at the time of the Alexandrian Council; the Church of Antioch being, as it were, the stage, upon which the two parties in dispute were represented, the Meletians siding with the orthodox of the East, and the Eustathians with those of the West. The Council, however, instead of taking part with either, determined, in accordance with the writings of Athanasius himself, that, since the question merely related to the usage of words, it was expedient to allow Christians to understand the Hypostasis in one or other sense indifferently. The document which conveys its decision, informs us of the grounds of it. "If any propose to add explanations to the Creed of Nicæa, (says the Synodal letter,) silence such persons, and rather persuade them to study to be peaceable; for we ascribe such conduct to nothing short of a love of controversy. Some offence having been given by a declaration on the part of certain persons, that there are Three Hypostases, and it having been urged that this language is not Scriptural, and for that reason suspicious, we desired that the inquiry might not be pushed beyond the Nicene Confession. At the same time, in order to put an end to the controversy, we questioned them, whether they spoke, as the Arians, of Hypostases foreign and dissimilar to each other, and distinct in substance, each independent and separate in itself, as in the case of individual creatures, or the offspring of man, or, as gold differs in substance from silver, and both from brass; or, again, as other heretics, of Three Principles, and Three Gods. In answer, they solemnly assured us, that they neither said nor had imagined any such thing. On our inquiring, 'In what sense then do you say this, or why do you at all use such expressions?' they answered, 'Because we believe in the Holy Trinity, not as a Trinity in name only, but in truth and reality (ὑφεστῶσαν.) We acknowledge the Father truly and

[a] Theod. Hist. ii 8.

CHAP. V. SECT. II.

really such, and likewise the Son and the Holy Spirit, (Υἱὸν ἀληθῶς ἐνούσιον ὄντα καὶ ὑφεστῶτα, καὶ Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον ὑφεστὸς καὶ ὑπάρχον).' They said too, that they had not spoken of Three Gods, or Three Principles, nor would tolerate the statement or notion of it; but acknowledged a Trinity indeed, but only One Godhead, and One Principle, and the Son consubstantial with the Father, as the Council declared, and the Holy Spirit, not a creature, nor separate, but essential to and indivisible from, the substance of the Son and the Father.

"This explanation of the expressions in question, and the reasons for their use, seeming satisfactory, we next examined the other party, who were accused by the above-mentioned as holding but One Hypostasis, whether their sentiments coincided with those of the Sabellians, in destroying the real existence of the Son and Holy Spirit. They were as earnest as the others could be, in denying both the statement and thought of such a doctrine; 'but we use ὑπόστασις,' they said, 'considering it means the same as οὐσία (substance), and we hold that there is but one, because the Son is from the οὐσία (substance) of the Father, and because Their nature is one and the same; for we believe, as in One Godhead, so in the unity of God's nature, and not that the Father's is one, and that the Son's is another, and the Holy Ghost's another.' It appeared then, that both those, who were accused of holding Three Hypostases, agreed with the other party, and those, who spoke of one Substance, professed the doctrine of the former in the sense of their interpretation; by both was Arius anathematized as an enemy of Christ, Sabellius and Paulus of Samosata as impious, Valentinus and Basileides as strangers to the truth, Manichaeus, as an originator of wicked doctrines. And, after these explanations, all, by God's grace, unanimously agreed, that such expressions were not so desirable or accurate as the Nicene creed, the words of which they promised for the future to acquiesce in and to use."

Subsequent fortunes of the question.

Plain as was this statement, and natural as the decision resulting from it, yet it could scarcely be expected to find acceptance in a city, where recent events had increased dissensions of long standing. In providing the injured and zealous Eustathians with an ecclesiastical head, Lucifer had, under existing circumstances, administered a stimulant to the throbbings and festerings of the baser passions of human nature, passions, which it requires the strong exertion of Christian magnanimity and charity to overcome. The Meletians, on the other hand, recognized as they were by the Oriental Church as a legitimate branch of itself, were in the position of an establishment, and so exposed to the temptation of disdaining those, whom the surrounding Churches considered as schismatics. How far each party was in fault, we are not

able to determine; but blame lay somewhere, for the controversy about the Hypostasis, verbal as it was, became the characteristic of the quarrel between them, and only ended, when the Eustathians were finally absorbed by the larger and more powerful body.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

CHAP. VI.

THE second Œcumenical Council was held at Constantinople, A. D. 381—383. It is celebrated in the history of theology for its condemnation of the Macedonians, who, separating the Holy Spirit from the unity of the Father and Son, implied or inferred that He was a creature. A brief account of it is here added in its ecclesiastical aspect; the doctrine itself, to which it formally bore witness, having been incidentally discussed in the second chapter of this volume.

Death of Athanasius.

Eight years before the date of this Council, Athanasius had been taken to his rest. After a life of contest, prolonged, in spite of the hardships he encountered, beyond the age of seventy years, he fell asleep in peaceable possession of the Churches, for which he had suffered. The Council of Alexandria was scarcely concluded, when he was denounced by Julian, and saved his life by flight or concealment. Returning on Jovian's accession, he was for a fifth and last time forced to retreat before the ministers of his Arian successor Valens; and for four months lay hid in the sanctuary of his father's sepulchre. On a representation being made to the new Emperor, even with the consent of the Arians themselves, he was finally restored; and so it happened, through the good providence of God, that the fury of persecution, heavily as it threatened in his last years, yet was suspended till his death, when it at once burst forth upon the Church with renewed vigour. Thus he was permitted to muse over his past services, and his prospects of the future; to collect his mind to meet his God, gathering himself up with Jacob on his bed of age, and yielding up the ghost peacefully among his children. The words of his own comment on the Psalms belong to himself. "God has promised," he says, "to be a wall of fire round about, to those who believe in Him. The Apostolic Company knows this, and calls on Him to fulfil this promise to its members. Thou art my song always! By Thy providence I became famous. I was as a marvel unto many: yet not by mine own power had I so high a privilege.

For Thou wert He, Who gave me courage and zeal through Thine own aid. I have not been unmindful of what I was taught; but as I learned, so I told to others. Now that I am old and grey-headed, forsake me not, until I have showed Thy strength unto this generation, and Thy power, whereby the strong man was bound, and his goods spoiled. These I will show forth; nor Thy earthly blessings only, but those heavenly blessings too, which Thou hast purchased with Thine own blood."[a]

Yet, amid the decay of nature, and the visions of coming dissolution, the attention of Athanasius was in no wise turned from the active duties of his station. The vigour of his obedience* remained unabated; one of his last acts being the excommunication of the Governor of Lybia, for irregularity of life.

His death a loss to the Church.

At length, when the Great Confessor was removed, the Church sustained a loss, from which it never recovered. His resolute resistance of heresy had been but one portion of his services; a more excellent praise is due to him, for his charitable skill in binding together his brethren in unity. The Church of Alexandria was the natural mediator between the East and West; and Athanasius had well improved the advantages thus committed to him. His judicious interposition in the troubles at Antioch has lately been described; and the dissensions between his own Church and Constantinople, which ensued upon his death, may be taken to show, how much the combination of the Catholics depended on his silent authority. Controversies were for ever starting into existence among the Greek Christians; and the Arian had corrupted their spirit, where it had failed to impair their orthodoxy. Disputation superseded faith and ambition swayed the conduct, in the Eusebian school; and these evil introductions outlived its day. Patronized by the secular power, the great Churches of Christendom conceived a jealousy of each other, and gradually fortified themselves in their own resources. As Athanasius drew towards his end, the task of mediation became more difficult. In spite of his desire to keep aloof from party, circumstances threw him against his will into one of the two divisions, which were beginning to discover themselves in the Christian world. Even before his time, traces appear of a rivalry between the Asiatic and Egyptian Churches. The events of his own day, developing their differences of character, at the same time connected the latter with the Latins. The mistakes of his own friends obliged him to side with a seeming faction in the body of the Antiochene Church; and, in the schism which followed, he

[a] Athan. Expos. in Psalm lxx. * [? administration.]

CHAP. VI. found himself in opposition to the Catholic communities of Asia Minor and the East. Still, though the course of events tended to ultimate disruptions in the Catholic Church, his personal influence remained unimpaired to the last, and enabled him to interpose with good effect in the affairs of the East. This is well illustrated by a letter addressed to him shortly before his death, by St. Basil, who belonged to the contrary party, and had then recently been elevated to the exarchate of Cæsarea. It is here inserted, and may serve as a sort of valediction in parting with one, who, after the Apostles, has been a principal instrument, by which the sacred truths of Christianity have been conveyed and secured to the world.

Basil's reverence for Athanasius.

"To Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria. The more the sicknesses of the Church increase, so much the more earnestly do we all turn towards thy fulness of grace, persuaded that thy guardianship is our sole remaining comfort in our difficulties. By the power of thy prayers, by the wisdom of thy counsels, thou art able to carry us through this fearful storm; as all are sure, who have heard or made trial of thy gifts ever so little. Wherefore cease not both to pray for our souls, and to stir us up by thy letters; didst thou know the profit of these to us, thou wouldst never let pass an opportunity of writing to us. For me, were it vouchsafed to me, by the help of thy prayers, once to see thee, and to profit by the gifts lodged in thee, and to add to the history of my life a meeting with so great and apostolical a soul, surely I should consider myself to have received from the loving mercy of God a compensation for all the ills, with which my life has ever been afflicted."[a]

State of the East in the reign of Valens.

The trials of the Church, spoken of by Basil in this letter, were the beginnings of the persecution directed against it by the Emperor Valens. This prince, who succeeded Jovian in the East, had been baptised by Eudoxius; who, from the time he became possessed of the see of Constantinople, was the chief, and soon became the sole, though a powerful, support of the Eusebian faction. He is said to have bound Valens by oath, at the time of his baptism, that he would establish Arianism as the state religion of the East; and thus to have prolonged its ascendancy for an additional sixteen years after the death of Constantius. At the beginning of this period, the heretical party had been weakened by the secession of the Semi-arians, who had not merely left them, but had joined the Catholics. This part of the history affords a striking illustration, not only of the gradual influence of truth over error, but of the remarkable manner in which Divine Providence makes use of error itself as a preparation for truth;

[a] Basil. Ep. 80

i. e. employing the lighter forms of it in sweeping away those of a more offensive nature. Thus Semi-arianism became the bulwark and forerunner of the orthodoxy which it opposed. From A. D. 357, the date of the virtually Homœan formulary of Sirmium, it had protested against the impiety of the genuine Eusebians. In the successive Councils of Ancyra and Seleucia, in the two following years, it had condemned and deposed them; and had established the scarcely objectionable creed of Lucian. On its own subsequent disgrace at Court, it had concentrated itself on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont; while the high character of its leading bishops for gravity and strictness of life, and its influence over the monastic institutions, gave it a formidable popularity among the lower classes on the opposite coast of Thrace.

Concluding History of the Semi-arians.

Seven years after the Council of Seleucia, in the reign of Valens, the Semi-arians held a Council at Lampsacus, in which they condemned the Homœan formulary of Ariminum, confirmed the creed of the Dedication, and, after citing the Eudoxians to answer the accusations brought against them, proceeded to ratify the deposition of them, which had already been pronounced at Seleucia. At this time they seem to have entertained hopes of gaining the Emperor; but finding the influence of Eudoxius paramount at Court, their horror or jealousy of his party led them to a bolder step. They resolved on putting themselves under the protection of Valentinian, the orthodox Emperor of the West; and, finding it necessary for this purpose to stand well with the Latin Church, they at length overcame their repugnance to the Homoousion, and subscribed a formula, of which, (at least till the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 360,) they had been among the most eager and obstinate opposers. Fifty-nine Semi-arian Bishops gave in their assent to orthodoxy on this memorable occasion, which took place A. D. 366. Their deputies were received into communion by Liberius, who had recovered himself at Ariminum, and who wrote letters in favour of these new converts to the Churches of the East. On their return, they presented themselves before an orthodox Council then sitting at Tyana, exhibited the commendatory letters which they had received from Italy, Gaul, Africa, and Sicily, as well as Rome, and were joyfully acknowledged by the assembled prelates as members of the Catholic body. A final Council was appointed at Tarsus; whither it was hoped all the Churches of the East would send representatives, in order to complete the reconciliation between the two parties. But enough had been done, as it would seem, in the external course of events, to unite the scattered portions of the Church; and, when that end was on the point of accomplishment, the usual law of Divine Providence intervened, and left the sequel of the union as a task and

CHAP VI. a trial for Christians individually. The project of the Council failed; thirty-four Semi-arian Bishops suddenly opposed themselves to the purpose of their brethren, and protested against the Homoousion. The Emperor, on the other hand, recently baptised by Eudoxius, interfered; forbad the proposed Council, and proceeded to issue an edict, in which all bishops were deposed from their sees, who had been banished under Constantius, and restored by Julian. It was at this time, that the fifth exile of Athanasius took place, which was lately mentioned. A more cruel persecution followed in A. D. 371, and lasted for several years. The death of Valens, A. D. 378, was followed by the final downfall of Arianism in the Eastern Church.

The Macedonians.

As to Semi-arianism, it disappears from ecclesiastical history at the date of the Council of Tarsus; from which time the portion of the party, which remained non-conformist, is more properly designated Macedonian, or Pneumatomachist, from the chief article of their heresy.

State of the Church of Constantinople.

During the reign of Valens, much had been done in furtherance of evangelical truth, in the still remaining territory of Arianism, by the proceedings of the Semi-arians; but at the same period symptoms of returning orthodoxy, even in its purest form, had appeared in Constantinople itself. On the death of Eudoxius (A. D. 370), the Catholics elected an orthodox successor, by name Evagrius. He was instantly banished by the Emperor's command; and the population of Constantinople seconded the act of Valens, by the most unprovoked excesses towards the Catholics. Eighty of their clergy, who were in consequence deputed to lay their grievances before Valens, were put to death under circumstances of extreme treachery and barbarity. Faith, which was able to stand its ground in such a season of persecution, was naturally prompted to more strenuous acts, when prosperous times succeeded. On the death of Valens, the Catholics of Constantinople looked beyond their own community for assistance, in combating the dominant heresy. Evagrius, whom they had elected to the see, seems to have died in exile; and they invited in his place the celebrated Gregory Nazianzen, a man of diversified accomplishments, distinguished for his eloquence, and still more for his orthodoxy, his integrity, and the innocence, amiableness, and refinement of his character.

Gregory Nazianzen.

Gregory was a native of Cappadocia, and an intimate friend of the great Basil, with whom he had studied at Athens. On Basil's elevation to the exarchate of Cæsarea, Gregory had been placed by him in the bishoprick of Sasime; but, the appointment being contested by Anthimus, who claimed the primacy of the lower Cappadocia, he retired to Nazianzus, his father's diocese, where he took on himself those labours, to

which the elder Gregory had become unequal. After the death of the latter, he remained for several years without pastoral employment, till the invitation of the Catholics brought him to Constantinople. His election was approved by Meletius, patriarch of Antioch; and by Peter, the successor of Athanasius, who by letter recognised his accession to the metropolitan see.

His exertions in Constantinople.

On his first arrival there, he had no more suitable place of worship than his own lodgings, where he preached the Catholic doctrine to the dwindled communion over which he presided. But the result which Constantius had anticipated, when he denied to Athanasius a church in Antioch, soon showed itself at Constantinople. His congregation increased; the house, in which they assembled, was converted into a church by the pious liberality of its owner, with the name of Anastasia, in hope of that resurrection which now awaited the long-buried truths of the Gospel. The contempt, with which the Arians had first regarded him, was succeeded by a persecution on the part of the populace. An attempt was made to stone him; his church was attacked, and he himself brought before a magistrate, under pretence of having caused the riot. Violence so unjust did but increase the influence, which a disdainful toleration had allowed him to establish; and the accession of the orthodox Theodosius secured it.

Conduct of Theodosius.

On his arrival at Constantinople, the new Emperor resolved on executing in his capital the determination, which he had already prescribed by edict to the Eastern empire. The Arian bishops were required to subscribe the Nicene formulary, or to quit their sees. Demophilus, the Eusebian successor of Eudoxius, who was before introduced to our notice as an accomplice in the seduction of Liberius, was first presented with the alternative; and, with an honesty of which his party affords few instances, he refused to assent at once to opinions, which he had throughout his life been opposing, and retired from the city. Many bishops, however, of the Arian party conformed; and the Church was unhappily inundated by the very evil, which in the reign of Constantine the Athanasians had strenuously and successfully withstood.

Its unfortunate policy.

The unfortunate policy, which led to this measure, might seem at first sight to be sanctioned by the decree of the Alexandrian Council, which made subscription the test of orthodoxy; but, on a closer inspection, the cases will be found to be altogether dissimilar. When Athanasius acted upon that principle, in the reign of Julian, there was no secular object to be gained by conformity; or rather, the malevolence of the Emperor was peculiarly directed against those, whether orthodox or Semi-arians, who evinced any earnestness in the subject of Christianity. Even then, the recognition was not

CHAP. VI. extended to those, who had taken an active part on the side of heresy. On the other hand, the example of Athanasius himself, and Alexander of Constantinople, in the reign of Constantine, sufficiently marked their judgment; both of whom had resisted the attempt of the Court to force Arius upon the Church, even though he professed his assent to the Homoousion.

Gregory acquiesces.

Whether or not it was in Gregory's power to hinder the recognition of the Arianizers, or whether his firmness was not equal to his humility and zeal, the consequences of the measure are visible in the conduct of the General Council, which followed it. He himself may be considered as the victim of it; and he has left us in poetry and oratory his testimony to the unsoundness of principle, which the continued agitations of controversy had occasioned in the Eastern Church.

His description of himself and his times.

The following passage, from one of his Orations, illustrates both the state of the times, and his own beautiful character, though unequal to struggle against them. "Who is there," he says, "but will find, on measuring himself by St. Paul's rules for the conduct of Bishops and Priests,—that they should be sober, chaste, not fond to wine, not strikers, instructive, unblameable in all things, unassailable by the wicked,—that he falls far short of its perfection? . . I am alarmed to think of our Lord's censure of the Pharisees, and condemnation of the Scribes; disgraceful indeed would it be, should we, who are bid be so far above them in righteousness, in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, appear even worse than they. . . These thoughts haunt me night and day; they consume my bones, and feed on my flesh; they keep me from confidence, or from walking with erect countenance. They so humble me and cramp my mind, and place a chain on my tongue, that I cannot think of a Ruler's office, nor of correcting and guiding others, which is a talent above me; but only, how I myself may flee from the wrath to come, and wash myself some little from the poison of my sin. First, I must be reformed, and then reform others; learn wisdom, and then impart it; draw near to God, and then bring others; be cleansed, and then cleanse. 'When will you ever get to the end of this?' say the hasty and incautious, who are quick to build and to pull down. 'When will you place your light on a candlestick? Where is your talent?' So say friends of mine, who have more zeal for me than sobriety. Ah, my brave men, why ask my season for acting, and my plan? Surely the last day of payment is soon enough, the very close of life is an early day. Grey hairs have prudence, and youth is inexpert. Best be slow and sure; a kingdom for a day, not a tyranny for a life; a little gold, not a weight of lead. It was the shallow earth shot forth the early blade. . . . Truly

there is cause of fear, lest I be bound hand and foot and cast without the marriage chamber, as a bold intruder without fitting garment among the assembled guests. And yet I was called thither from my youth, (to confess a matter of my private life,) and on God was I thrown from the womb; made over to Him by my mother's vow, fixed in His service by hardships afterwards. Yea, and my own wish shot up beside His purpose, and my reason ran along with it; and all I had to give, wealth, splendour, health, literature, I brought and offered them to Him, Who called and saved me; my sole enjoyment of them being the resolve to turn away from them, my sole gain the loss of them for Christ. To undertake the government and guidance of souls is above me, who have not yet well learned to be guided, nor to be sanctified as far as is fitting. Much more is this so in a time like the present; when it is a great thing to secure some shelter from the encompassing storm, in which one sees others tossed to and fro, and so to escape the tempestuous and rayless night. This is a time when the members of the Christian body war with each other, and the scant residue of love is scattered abroad. . . . Moabites and Ammonites, who were forbidden even to enter the Church of Christ, now tread our holiest places. We have opened to all, not gates of righteousness, but of mutual reviling and injury. We think those the best of men, not who keep from every idle word through fear of God, but such as have most success in slandering their neighbour, openly or covertly, and cherish under their tongue tumult and trouble, or, (to speak more truly,) the poison of asps. And we hunt out the sins of others, not to lament but to blame them; not to cure but to open the sore; and to make the wounds of others an excuse for our own. Men are judged good and bad, not by their conduct, but by friendship and enmity. We praise to-day, we call names to-morrow. Impiety meets with every allowance. So magnanimously are we forgiving in wicked ways!"[a]

Maximus the Cynic.

The first disturbance in the reviving Church of Constantinople had arisen from the ambition of Maximus, a Cynic philosopher, who aimed at supplanting Gregory in his Patriarchate. He was a friend and countryman of Peter, the new Patriarch of Alexandria; and had suffered banishment in the Oasis, on the persecution which followed the death of Athanasius. His reputation was considerable among learned men of the day, as is shown by the letters addressed to him by Basil. Gregory fell in with him at Constantinople; and pleased at the apparent strictness and manliness of his conduct, he received him into his house, baptized him, and at

[a] Greg Orat. i. 119—137.

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Gregory resolves to retire

Fresh mortifications awaited the eloquent preacher, to whom the Church of Constantinople owed its resurrection. While the Arians censured his retiring habits, and his abstinence from the innocent pleasures of life, his own flock began to complain of his neglecting to use his influence at Court for their advantage. Overwhelmed with the disquietudes, to which these occurrences gave birth, Gregory resolved to bid adieu to a post, which required a less sensitive or a more vigorous mind than his own. In a farewell oration, he recounted his labours and sufferings during the time he had been among them, commemorated his success, and exhorted them to persevere in the truth, which they had learned from him. His congregation were affected by this address; and, a reaction of feeling taking place, they passionately entreated him to abandon a resolve, which would involve the ruin of orthodoxy in Constantinople, and they declared that they would not quit the church, till he acceded to their importunities. At their entreaties, he consented to suspend the execution of his purpose for a while; that is, until the Eastern prelates who were expected at the General Council, which had by that time been convoked, should appoint a Bishop in his room.

He is put into possession of St. Sophia by the Civil Power.

The circumstances attending the arrival of Theodosius at Constantinople, connected as they were with the establishment of the true religion, still were calculated to inflict an additional wound on his feelings; and to increase his indisposition to continue in a situation, endeared to him by its earlier associations. The inhabitants of an opulent and luxurious metropolis, familiarized to Arianism by its forty years ascendancy among them, and disgusted at the apparent severity of the orthodox school, prepared to resist the installation of Gregory in the cathedral of St. Sophia. A strong military

force was appointed to escort him thither; and the Emperor gave countenance to the proceedings by his own presence. Allowing himself to be put in possession of the church, Gregory was nevertheless firm to his purpose of not seating himself upon the Archiepiscopal throne; and, when the light-minded multitude clamorously required it, he was unequal to the task of addressing them, and deputed one of his Presbyters to speak in his stead.

His dislike of the Court.

Nor were the manners of the Court more congenial to his well-regulated mind, than the lawless spirit of the people. Offended at the disorders which he witnessed there, he shunned the condescending advances of the Emperor; and was with difficulty withdrawn from the duties of his station, the solitude of his own thoughts, and the activity of pious ministrations, prayer and fasting, the punishment of offenders and the visitation of the sick. Careless of personal splendour, he allowed the revenues of his see to be expended in supporting its dignity, by inferior ecclesiastics, who were in his confidence; and, while he defended the principle on which Arianism had been dispossessed of its power, he exerted himself with earnestness to protect the heretics from all intemperate execution of the Imperial decree.

Of the Arianizing Prelates.

Nor was the elevated refinement of Gregory better adapted to sway the minds of the corrupt hierarchy which Arianism had engendered, than to rule the Court and the people. "If I must speak the truth," he says in one of his letters, "I feel disposed to shun every conference of the Heads of the Church; because I never saw Synod brought to a happy issue, nor remedying, but rather increasing, existing evils. For rivalry and ambition are stouter than verbal decisions;—do not think me extravagant for saying so;—and a mediator is more likely to be assailed himself, than to succeed in his attempt at pacification. Accordingly, I have fallen back upon my own resources, and consider retirement the only means of tranquillity." [a]

Council of Constantinople.

Such was the state of things, under which the second Œcumenical Council, as it has since been considered, was convoked. It assembled in May, A. D. 381; being designed to put an end, as far as might be, to those very disorders, which unhappily found their principal exercise in the meetings which were to remove them. The Western Church enjoyed at this time an almost perfect peace, and sent no deputies to Constantinople. But in the Oriental provinces, besides the distractions caused by the various heretical offshoots of Arianism, its indirect effects existed in the dissensions of the Catholics themselves; the schism at Antioch; the claims of Maximus to

[a] Greg. Naz. ep. 55.

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the see of Constantinople; and recent disturbances at Alexandria, where the loss of Athanasius was already painfully visible. Added to these, was the ambiguous position of the Macedonians; who resisted the orthodox doctrine, yet were only by implication heretical, or at least some of them far less than others. Thirty-six of their Bishops attended the Council, principally from the neighbourhood of the Hellespont; of the orthodox 150, Meletius, of Antioch, being the president. Other eminent prelates present were Gregory Nyssen, brother of St. Basil, who had died some years before; Amphilochius of Iconium, Diodorus of Tarsus, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Gelasius of Cæsaræa, in Palestine.

Death of Meletius.

The Council had scarcely accomplished its first act, the establishment of Gregory in the see of Constantinople, to the exclusion of Maximus, when Meletius, the President, died; an unhappy event, as not only removing a check from its more turbulent members, but in itself supplying the materials of immediate discord. An arrangement had been effected between the two orthodox communions at Antioch, by which it was provided, that the survivor of the rival Bishops should be acknowledged by the opposite party, and a termination thus put to the schism. This was in accordance with the principle acted upon by the Alexandrian Council, on the separation of the Meletians from the Arians. At that time the Eustathian party was called on to concede, by acknowledging Meletius; and now, on the death of Meletius, it became the duty of the Meletians in turn to submit to Paulinus, whom Lucifer had consecrated as Bishop of the Eustathians. Schism, however, admits not of these simple remedies. The self-will of a Latin Bishop had defeated the plan of conciliation in the former instance; and now the pride and jealousy of the Orientals revolted from communion with a prelate of Latin creation. The attempt of Gregory, who had succeeded to the presidency of the Council, to calm their angry feelings, and to persuade them to deal fairly with the Eustathians, as well as to restore peace to the Church, only directed their violence against himself. It was in vain that his own connexion with the Meletian party evidenced the moderation and candour of his advice; in vain that the age of Paulinus gave assurance, that the nominal triumph of the Latins could be of no long continuance. Flavian, who, together with others, had solemnly sworn, that he would not accept the bishoprick in case of the death of Meletius, permitted himself to be elevated to the vacant see; and Gregory, driven from the Council, took refuge from its clamours in a remote part of Constantinople.

Arrival of the Egyptian Prelates.

About this time the arrival of the Egyptian bishops increased the dissension. By some inexplicable omission they had not been summoned to the Council; and they came, in-

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flamed with resentment against the Orientals. They had throughout taken the side of Paulinus, and now their earnestness in his favour was increased by their jealousy of his opponents. Another cause of offence was given to them, in the recognition of Gregory before their arrival; nor did his siding with them in behalf of Paulinus, avail to avert from him the consequences of their indignation. Maximus was their countryman, and the deposition of Gregory was necessary to appease their insulted patriotism. Accordingly, the former charge was revived of the illegality of his promotion. A Canon of the Nicene Council prohibited the translation of bishops, priests, or deacons, from Church to Church; and, while it was calumniously pretended, that Gregory had held in succession three bishopricks, Sasime, Nazianzus, and Constantinople, it could not be denied, that, at least, he had passed from Nazianzus, the place of his original ordination, to the Imperial city. Urged by this fresh attack, Gregory once more resolved to retire from an eminence, which he had from the first been reluctant to occupy, except for the sake of the remembrances, with which it was connected. The Emperor with difficulty accepted his resignation; but at length allowed him to depart from Constantinople, Nectarius being placed on the patriarchal throne in his stead.

Council of Aquileia.

In the mean while, a Council had been held at Aquileia of the bishops of the north of Italy, with a view of inquiring into the faith of two Bishops of Dacia, accused of Arianism. During its session, news was brought of the determination of the Constantinopolitan Fathers to appoint a successor to Meletius; and, surprised both by the unexpected continuation of the schism, and by the slight put on themselves, they petitioned Theodosius to permit a general Council to be convoked at Alexandria, which the delegates of the Latin Church might attend. Some dissatisfaction, moreover, was felt for a time at the appointment of Nectarius, in the place of Maximus, whom they had originally recognized. They changed their petition shortly after, and expressed a wish that a Council should be held at Rome.

Correspondence between the two Councils.

These letters from the West were submitted to the Council of Constantinople, at its second, or, (as some say,) third sitting, A. D. 382 or 383, at which Nectarius presided. An answer was returned to the Latins, declining to repair to Rome, on the ground of the inconvenience, which would arise from the absence of the Eastern bishops from their dioceses; the Creed and other doctrinal statements of the Council were sent them, and the promotion of Nectarius and Flavian was maintained to be agreeable to the Nicene Canons, which determined, that the Bishops of a province had the right of consecrating such of their brethren, as were chosen by the people and clergy, with-

out the interposition of foreign Churches; an exhortation to follow peace was added, and to prefer the edification of the whole body of Christians, to personal attachments and the interests of individuals.

Additions to the Nicene Creed.

Thus ended the second General Council. As to the addition made by it to the Nicene Creed, it is conceived in the temperate spirit, which might be expected from those men, who took the more active share in its doctrinal discussions. The ambitious and tumultuous part of the assembly seems to have been weary of the controversy, and to have left the settlement of it to the more experienced and serious-minded of their body. The Creed of Constantinople is said to be the composition of Gregory Nyssen.[a]

From the date of this Council, Arianism was formed into a sect exterior to the Catholic Church; and, taking refuge among the Barbarian Invaders of the Empire, is merged among those external enemies of Christianity, whose history cannot be regarded as strictly ecclesiastical. Such is the general course of religious error; which rises within the sacred precincts, but in vain endeavours to take root in a soil uncongenial to it. The domination of heresy, however prolonged, is but one stage in its existence; it ever hastens to an end, and that end is the triumph of the Truth. "I myself have seen the ungodly in great power," says the Psalmist, "and flourishing like a green bay tree; I went by, and lo, he was gone; I sought him, but his place could no where be found." Even the Papal Apostacy, which seems at first sight an exception to this rule, has lasted but the same proportion of the whole duration of Christianity, which Arianism occupied in its day; that is, if we date it, as in fairness we ought, from the fatal Council of Trent. And, as to the present perils, with which our branch of the Church is beset, as they bear a marked resemblance to those of the fourth century, so are the lessons, which the latter period

[a] Whether or not the Macedonians explicitly denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, is uncertain, but they viewed Him as essentially separate from, and external to, the One Indivisible Godhead. Accordingly, the Creed, (which is that since incorporated in the public services of the Church), without declaring more than the occasion required, closes all speculations concerning the incomprehensible subject, by simply confessing His *unity with* the Father and Son. It declares, moreover, that He is the *Lord* or Sovereign Spirit, because the heretics considered Him to be but a minister of God, and the supreme *Giver* of life, because they considered Him a mere instrument, by whom we received the gift. The last clause of the second paragraph in the Creed is directed against the heresy of Marcellus of Ancyra.

offers us, especially cheering and edifying to Christians of the present day. Then as now, there was the prospect, and partly the presence in the Church, of an Heretical Power enthralling it, exerting a varied influence and an usurped claim in the appointment of her functionaries, and interfering with the management of her internal affairs. Now as then, "whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Meanwhile, we may take comfort in reflecting, that, though the present tyranny has more of insult, it has hitherto had less of scandal, than attended the ascendancy of Arianism; we may rejoice in the piety, prudence, and varied graces of our Spiritual Rulers; and may rest in the confidence, that, should the hand of Satan press us sore, our Athanasius and Basil will be given us in their destined season, to break the bonds of the Oppressor, and let the captives go free.

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